An untamed force

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An untamed force

by DrHannibalLecterMD

Summary

A season 1 canon divergence with a different meeting.

This story contains 3 parts, Parts 1 & 2 are finished, Part 3 is being created.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

Christmas carols were just audible over the chatter of the guests at Alana's Christmas party. Of course, he could not refuse her invite, given how often she attended his dinner parties he was more than happy to attend one she was hosting at her new house.

Hannibal watched Alana greet her guests, giving her a smile and helping to boost her confidence. He knew she had been nervous about this, it was the first time she had hosted something herself and she had asked for his help which he was more than happy to give.

Making his way around the room as he spoke to some people briefly, a few he knew from his former days as a surgeon at John Hopkins. Of course, he had spotted a few people he wished to avoid as well, it was as Frederick Chilton started to make his way over towards him that he turned and took a step forward only to have a man run into the front of him, spilling red wine down the front of his suit.

"I'm so sorry."

Part of him was annoyed that this man had not exactly been looking where he was going, even now when Hannibal tried to look him in the eye he kept them down on the floor or at the suit that was now being stained. The blue fabric turning a darker shade.

"Please, don't worry about it." Answering the man's apology, at least he was courteous.

"Let me get a napkin."

Before Hannibal could even answer the man had taken off, his now empty wine glass still in hand. Giving a sigh he looked down at the front of his jacket, unbuttoning it and taking it over to the closet. Just as he was hanging it up the man came back, a napkin in his hand. The hallway was empty except for the two of them now, the door to the party was only a few feet away still open.

"I should have been looking where I was going." He spoke, holding the napkin out to Hannibal.

"It seems you were in a rush to get away."

There was an awkward shuffle from the man, his eyes darted up to meet Hannibal's for a brief moment before looking away again. "Yeah, I was trying to avoid-"

"Will Graham, there you are!" Frederick Chilton happily chimed as he sauntered down the hallway towards them. "I hope Dr Lecter is not keeping you to himself Mr Graham, or should I call you Dr.?"

The way the man tried to wiggle his eyebrows at Will and himself made Hannibal feel something almost akin to being psychically ill. Instead, he gave a jovial smile as he spoke calmly. Hearing a slight groan from his companion.

“Hello, Frederick.” Replied Will, already trying to pull away to make his escape.

“There was nothing untoward Frederick, merely a simple accident. Will was just showing me where the closet was, lest I want the wine to seep into my shirt. We were just on our way back.” Answered Hannibal, not blaming Will for trying to escape the other man.

It was truthful, though there was a slight lie entwined within, one that would keep the beta guessing. Gesturing for the man to lead the way they both walked towards the party, hearing Frederick follow them quickly.

“It's quite astonishing what you do for the FBI, profiling killers. You’re quite the topic of conversation in psychiatric circles.” Frederick hurried along, dashing to catch them.

“I came here for a party Frederick, not to be analysed.” Spat Will, growing more frustrated.

“Perhaps you should be, were lacking material on your speciality. I could make a special appointment for you.” Frederick answered, coming to run in front of Will and make him stop.

Hannibal watched Will’s features contort slightly, scent omega pheromones in the air tainted with something burning. His alpha instinct kicked in, wishing to protect, though he doubted that Will was the one in need of protection. “You were recently appointed head of the hospital, however, I was under the impression you were taking some time off when I spoke to you earlier.”

There was a snort of derision from Frederick, his shoulders rolling back as he tried to make himself appear taller. “Working with the criminally insane does not have office hours.”

“How unfortunate for your patients, doctor.” Sassed Will, moving around Frederick.

There was an unsympathetic look shot at Frederick who bristled slightly at his colleague's disdain. “If you will excuse us, Frederick.” Moving past the man as he caught up to Will, following him into the party and to a corner of the room.

“I feel I must apologise for my colleague.”

“How could you ever work for someone like that?” Will spoke, trying hide to not fire something spiteful back at Dr Lecter.

“The only work we share is that we are both psychiatrists. The similarities end there.”

“Oh,” There was a huff of anger from Will, his hackles rising slightly. “So you have most likely been privy to these circles which discuss my condition. Thank you, doctor, but I will see myself out.”

“I find that to be quite rude actually, most certainly there are better options to approach someone to study them if they are interested.”

Will paused for a moment, looking up to see Hannibal’s eyes. Gauging if he was telling the truth or not, but he saw no lie in them. “And what are your views on human studies Dr Lecter?”

Lips lifted into a subtle smile. “If the patient is willing of course, however certain conditions should be abstracted into a form where the reader would be unable to identify the patient, and only published to benefit others who suffer. Not for the fame that some doctors seek or the tenures, they wish to secure. Or the alternate is to publish posthumously.”

The words helped to calm Will, his features relaxing, shoulders dropping as he took in a deep breath. “After the patient’s death or the doctor?”

“Whichever comes first.”

Will gave a small smile, feeling more at ease he stuck his hand out to shake, a sheepish look in his eye. “Will,”

“Hannibal, it is a pleasure to meet you.” Shaking the offered hand as he smiled back at the omega. “I’m guessing you must know Frederick through your work.”

“There are people within those walls who have been put there because of my assistance.” Will looked down, hands fiddling slightly before looking to the side and at the guests of the party.

“It must be difficult to always see the worst of what people are capable of,” Hannibal spoke gently, interested more in the omega and somewhat in his profession.

As a waiter passed them, Hannibal took two flutes of champagne, handing one to Will as he sipped on his own. He wasn’t surprised when Will took a bigger gulp of his. Lowering his defences would not be so bad, he was curious what the man’s mind was like, how he thought and what he knew of the Ripper.

“No doubt you must have heard some shocking things yourself,” Will spoke, the flute already half empty.

“There have been a few things that have certainly made me think of my profession,” spoke Hannibal, not lying to the empathy. “Though I came with the intention to help people understand themselves and their inner thoughts.”

“You make all that poking and prodding into people’s minds sound so noble.” Laughed Will, draining the rest of his flute. “Normally people who fall into the psychiatric circles are those who are afraid of blood, but you don’t strike me as the type.”

“What gave it away?” asked Hannibal, curious what Will saw.

“The confidence you have, and your hands. There surgeon’s hands, to steady holding that wine glass and with a delicacy that is used by a surgeon or an artist.”

Hannibal smiled a little wider as he came closer. “Being a former ER surgeon was an art in itself, the stitches, moulding the body… You are quite remarkable Will.”

Finally, Will gave Hannibal a genuine smile as his gaze met the other man's eyes and held them for longer than a few seconds. Each gazing at the other until Will spoke again. “They say if you hold eye contact for more than six seconds that you are either thinking about

murder or sex. Both primal urges, even more so with our gender's. Tell me Dr Lecter, what are you thinking about right now?"

Licking lips as he closed the space between them, a hand coming to rest on Will's hip as he absently put his own flute of champagne down and stared into blue eyes. "It's quite convenient you're standing under the mistletoe… Would be a shame to break the tradition."

Watching Will's adam's apple bob as he swallowed, he stood perfectly still waiting for the man to make his decision. Hannibal got the answer he wanted when the omega leant forward, kissing the alpha deeply as a hand came to grab the front of Hannibal's shirt.

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They hadn't left Alana's yard when pants were already being shredded in the back of the Bentley. The soft squeak of leather and squeal as Hannibal pulled Will's legs up and looked down at him on the backseat of his car.

"So slick and ready for me." Murmured Hannibal, a finger pushing past the tight ring of muscle, giving it a wiggle before a second pushed in.

"Are you going to fuck me or just play games?" Will asked as he tilted his hips up and wrapped his legs around Hannibal's lower half. Licking his lips when he saw the alpha was already so hard and ready for him.

Hannibal laughed, withdrawing his fingers as he raised them to his lips and tasted them while looking at Will. Will couldn't deny it was hot, hand reaching out to grab the doctor's tie as he pulled him down. "Maybe I should push you down and ride you if you aren't interested."

"Are you asking for permission?" Hannibal smirked.

It made Will grin in return, sitting up as he pushed the alpha down onto his back and grabbed the alpha's cock in one hand, slowly stroking it as he straddled the alpha's hips.

"What a cunning boy you are." Spoke Hannibal, gazing up at the omega.

"I assure you, I am no boy. I don't find you that interesting, *doctor,"* Will smirked, silencing Hannibal as he lowered himself onto the swollen cock. "I just find you *very* fuckable."

He moved slowly at first, adjusting to the size and length as Will let it go deeper. His hands coming to stroke Hannibal's face, only pausing in his movements at times to lean down and kiss before he rode the alpha.

It didn't take long for the windows to steam up, for Will to rest his hand against one as he quickened his movements as they both neared their climax. He came first, stopping as he felt his ass clench around the forming knot before being rewarded with feeling Hannibal come next that drew out a second orgasm from him that left him boneless and limp.

Laying down on Hannibal's chest as he waited, he let the alpha play with his hair and kiss him gently.

“We could go back to my place,” Hannibal spoke gently, tracing his finger down Will’s jaw as he let curls brush his own cheek.

“I should get going.” Answered Will, sitting up as he drew hips up. The knot was not as deflated yet to let them untie easily, there was a tug before he finally had freedom and sat down to start pulling on his pants. Ignoring the mess he could feel oozing down his cheeks.

“Can I call you?” Hannibal asked, more watching Will as he got dressed himself. He was not surprised to see the omega shake his head, so he pulled out his wallet, taking out a business card where he wrote down his personal contact details on the back. “I’d very much like to see you again, for dinner or simply drinks.”

Taking the card, Will looked at it for a moment, fingers running over the indentations from the pen before he crammed it into his jacket pocket. “Sure.” He replied, doing up his shoes before getting out of the car. “Good night… Hannibal.”

Before Hannibal even had the chance to return the farewell, Will had shut the door. He sat in the car, hoping that the omega would call him back. He seemed interested, but hesitant. The omega’s fear made him rude.

- 5 months later -

After a week he had tried to contact Will, met only with the omega hanging up on his call. He paused to think about what else he could do to get the omega’s attention. Given his occupation and that he assisted the FBI in some of its hunts for killers he set out to make his own work feared again.

Five months later he invited Alana over to his house for dinner as he spoke about the kills that the Ripper had left out only a few weeks ago. She grimaced when she had thought of the three dead, an alpha and two betas before she gave a sad smile.

“It is gruesome, but we know it is the Ripper from the organs missing. Jack’s wound up over it, storming around and making everyone work overtime. He’s not impressed when one of the profiler's to a leave of absence from the field.” Alana said as she swirled the red wine in her glass before taking a sip.

“Will Graham,” Hannibal smiled as he watched Alana look puzzled at how he knew. “Freddie Lounds wrote quite the article on him in Tattler Crime.”

“I’m surprised you read that.”

“Difficult to avoid, it seems she is the only one covering the Ripper story with all the details. From a professional perspective, the killer’s state of mind is unique. But what prompted Will’s leave from the case?”

“I’m not sure, he hasn’t spoken to me much of late and he has been missing classes from the academy where he teaches. I’ve been covering for him a lot.” Sighs Alana, setting her glass down. “But Jack was pissed when the article about Will was published, got a court order to prevent her from posting anything else about him for a year. It fell under the omega protection act. Will was far from happy about it.”

“Does he have an issue with is status?”

“I’ve said too much already,” Alana looked away, ashamed at betraying Will’s trust and blaming the wine for the slip of her tongue about Will’s omega status. Even though Hannibal probably knew from the article that Freddie had published. “It’s always an alpha’s instinct to try and protect, Will doesn’t want that.”

“Perfectly understandable,” Hannibal nodded. “Well, if you are ever in need of assistance I would be more than happy to help with the FBI’s investigations.” He offered, hoping that when the Ripper left a note for the FBI to find that he would be asked to join and have his chance to ‘bump’ into Will again.

- 13 Months after meeting Will -

It had been just on the hour when he had told Franklyn their session was over, sparing him a few minutes as he knew the beta would delay his exit from his office. All in the hopes of becoming closer to him, the futile attempt to seduce him, speaking of friendship when he truly wanted companionship. One that he was never going to be offered by Hannibal, yet his subtle and gentle remarks fell on deaf ears. The man so enthralled by the alpha he still flaunted himself so eagerly, unaware of the mockery he was making of himself.

When he opened the exit door, he found a man standing there. He gave him a friendly smile, one that did not reach his eyes. Observing the man as he quickly looked from him to his patient. Making a move to take Franklyn’s hand.

“Dr Lecter.”

Hannibal waited, watching Franklyn looked perplexed, looking from the stranger to him and back before Hannibal decided to speak.

“This is a private exit for my patients, may I help you?”

“Oh, Dr Lecter.”

Franklyn’s hand was quickly dropped as the stranger stepped around him, Hannibal was growing more suspicious. The appearance of the man was too neat, his suit was not tailored but it was worn, something that showed off his shoulders and his height. It felt like something an investigator would wear, or someone involved in the FBI. Then he was curious what had brought the man to his doorstep, without even a phone call.

“I’m Jack Crawford with the FBI,” the man spoke, extending his hand now to shake Hannibal’s. “May I come in.”

He shook the hand while keeping a straight face. “You may wait in the waiting room… Thank you, Franklyn.”

Hannibal stepped back into his office, closing the door behind him as he moved to his desk and put away his diary. Opening the drawer in the desk, he pulled out one of the ready made syringes, tucking it up his sleeve just in case as he put everything in order. He was confident that the man was not aware of his hobbies, that this visit was purely business, one could never be too prepared in case he was wrong.

“Please… Come in.” Hannibal greeted when he opened the door and watched Agent Crawford stand, the man walking into his office where he paused and looked around before turning back and giving a forced smile.

“No secretary?” spoke Jack, curious as to a man of Hannibal’s wealth did not have someone employed to assist him.

“Alas, she bonded to a lovely alpha and has left to start a family… I was sad to see her go, though it is not uncommon with young omegas’.”

“No, it is unfortunate but I can understand the allure of starting a family. But you're not bonded are you Dr Lecter?” Jack pushed.

“Not yet.”

“Are these yours?” Jack asked, eyes falling to the table that displayed some of Hannibal’s unfinished projects. Carefully, he moved a few to have a better look at one. “The attention to detail is incredible.”

“My boarding school in Paris.” Hannibal moved closer, preparing himself for a moment where he may have to act and kill the agent.

Jack leant in to look closer at one particular print, avoiding the picture of the wound man that laid underneath. “I can see now why you were offered a scholarship at John’s Hopkins,”

“Am I under investigation Agent Crawford?”

“Oh, no.” Laughed Jack, turning to face the doctor. “A mutual friend recommended you to me. Alana Bloom.”

“Ah,” Hannibal relaxed, moving his hands behind his back as he tucked the half prepared syringe away. “Dr Bloom was quite the student, though now a teacher as I understand it.”

“She also has been helping us to profile several active serial killers, though she believes you may be able to assist us with another. Have you been watching the news lately?”

“Hard to be unaware of the fear one man is responsible for… Am I correct to presume this is about the individual that has been referred to as “The executioner”?” Hannibal enquired,

knowing he would be unable to refuse the offer to help catch the killer that had been drawing attention away from his own murders.

The Agent seemed to harden when he heard the name spoken aloud. “You have a unique understanding of social exclusion I believe would help us in creating a profile and catching the killer.”

“Your killer from what I have read in the papers does not seem to have a problem fitting into a society which is why he has been so hard to catch. I imagine when you do, there will be many shocked friends and family who would say that he was not capable of this level of violence towards another human being.” Hannibal reasoned. “Is there another reason you are asking for my assistance on the case?”

“One of my best profilers is… difficult to work with. I need someone there to guide him, point him in the right direction and assist him. Can you do that Dr Lecter?”

There was a small smirk on Hannibal’s lips, an understanding about what he was truly being asked to do. “What is your profiler’s name?”

“Will Graham.”

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The office felt cramped as Will stared at the board on the wall, the four victims faces and pictures of their gruesome death displayed as Will tried to piece together why the killer had chosen these victims.

When the door opened and Jack walked in, Will did not even turn to look at the man, only when the second person made their appearance.

“Will, this is-“

“Dr Lecter.” Will finished, standing as he looked confused and fresh memories of their first meeting swam to the surface. He couldn’t help but to feel his cheeks burn slightly as he looked to Jack.

“You two have met before?” Jack asked, surprised by this information.

“Through a mutual friend’s party, yes.” Hannibal supplied, undoing the front of his jacket as he walked over to the board Will had just been looking at. “Quite the medieval torture technique that this killer seems to display. Do you have the autopsy reports?” He asked, ignoring Will completely to watch his reaction, having already seen the blush.

“Perhaps Will can fill you in,” Jack spoke as he sat behind his desk.

“Actually I’m late,” Will stated as he stood up and grabbed his coat and satchel.

“Will!” Jack admonished him, voice booming that made Will freeze on the spot and turn slowly to look at him. “We’ve just had confirmation of someone going missing. The victim’s wife found a page in their apartment.”

Briefly Will looked to the door then back at Jack. “It will be hours before we find a body.”

“I don’t want to find a body.” Growled Jack, leaning forward in his seat. “Perhaps you and Dr Lecter can go and interview the wife, try and draw a reason as to how our killer is choosing them.”

“You want me to conduct interviews now?” Will laughed, his tone sarcastic.

“No, that is why Dr. Lecter will be joining you.”

It made the smirk on Will’s face vanish, a scowl worn in its place. “Fine, I’ll be back in half an hour ready to go. I need to make arrangements.” He stormed from the room, the door slamming behind him to make his point about how upset he was.

Jack gave a long sigh. “I’m sorry about that doctor, he can be quite antisocial at times.”

“No need. I imagine this case has everyone stressed, but I will try my best to be of assistance.” Hannibal smiled. “It may be best if I talk to Will alone, in a calmer environment.”

There was a tilt of Jack’s head before he gave a smile. “Then it may be best for you to go and see him now, he’ll be at the end of the hall on the right… Here is the address and the files. I’ll phone you if we have any new information available. Police are there and are waiting for your arrival.”

Taking the files that Jack gave to him, Hannibal opened one up to look through briefly as he left the office and made his way down to where Jack had said Will would be.

When he turned the corner and saw Will he froze, he had honestly expected to go to the profiler’s office or lecture hall. But this was a shock to him. Will was there, out the front, smiling and laughing happily as he bounced a baby in his arms and cooed gently to them. Hannibal slowly walked towards the daycare centre while taking in the baby in Will’s arm, guessing from the blue it was a boy, his size would indicate him to be no more than six months.

It was a shock, he had never smelled another alpha on Will nor seen a claiming mark on him. Even just before in the room, there had been no scent. As he came closer, Will looked up and caught his gaze. Immediately he turned away and gave the child back to a woman who had been watching them. His eyes followed the child, taking note of the cute features now that he was only feet away. The dark hair with curls, the slightly darker coloured skin to his father, and those hazel eyes that made him stare. Ones he recognised.

“Daddy has to go to work, but he’ll be back later, ok.” Spoke Will, pressing a kiss to his son’s forehead.

“Say bye-bye to daddy, Eros,” The woman said, making the small boy wave his hand at Will before they turned around and walked away.

Hannibal could not stop staring until Will grabbed a hold of him and forcibly yanked him out of it.

“Did Jack put you up to this? God, I can’t believe him!” hissed Will, annoyed at having his moment interrupted.

“Jack informed me of where I was likely to find you. He did not mention that I would be interrupting. My apologies.”

Will took a deep breath before he replied. “Fine, let's just go.”

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Once they were in the car and heading out the gate, Hannibal made cleared his throat and glanced at Will.

“Were you ever going to tell me?”

“About what?” said Will.

“About being a father.”

There was a long pause before Will sighed. “No,”

“I believe I had the right to know about this,” Hannibal spoke, feeling a mixture of emotions at confirming the child was his.

“I’ve never asked you for anything, I don’t want anything.”

“You may not, but I would like to know my son.”

“Our son.” Will corrected. “I’m not promising anything, and I would appreciate it if you didn’t inform everyone.”

“You may have to notify Agent Crawford about this as it will affect the case we are working on,” Hannibal spoke causally.

“And I suppose you want to spend time with him as well,” Will spoke, rubbing his forehead. Not that he was against the idea, but there was a reason as to why he had avoided the psychiatrist and telling him about his child. Even though it was selfish, he truly thought it was better for the both of them.

“Yes,” admitted Hannibal. “How old is he?” he asked, the first of many questions that he had for the omega about his child as his plans changed rapidly. He needed time to think, but he wanted to know this child, to be a part of his life. And he was not prepared to have Will stand in his way.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

Thank you to Fataldrum who gives me inspiration and beta read this for me <3

His hands gripped the steering wheel tightly. Driving gave him the perfect excuse to not look over Hannibal and to avoid conversation, immersing himself in the GPS as it guided him to the location. Will did not want to know how the man felt about the news, did not want to read or empathize with him. Pulling up at the address, he cut the engine.

“Let’s keep it professional,” spoke Will, trying to keep his tone neutral. Opening the door to the car, he didn’t wait for the Hannibal to respond.

The front door to the residential home already had a police guard, two uniformed officers standing there talking to each other, one looking up when Will made his way to them.

“Who are you? Did Crawford send you?” asked one of the officers, turning his body to block the doorway.

“Will Graham,” came the quick answer as he pulled out his temporary badge, showing it to the man there. From behind, he could hear the door of the car shut. “We’re here to speak to the wife.”

The officer gave a nod, stepping aside to allow Will and Hannibal to enter. A glance over his shoulder showed Hannibal following him, a few feet between them as he made his way inside.

Pictures lined the hallway, showing the smiling faces of a married couple and three children. As Will walked down the hallway, he saw the changes in the pictures, the children becoming older and the two parents growing farther apart. He wondered what made them drift away from each other from the first photo, where they held each other tightly, to the most recent one, where the victim’s wife only had a hand on her husband’s shoulder. She was standing while he sat.

It was then he heard a sob coming from a door that was just ajar. Will walked to it, hand reaching out to push it open when someone on the other side beat him to it. A female cop stood in the doorway, her eyes instantly fixed onto him before they looked to Hannibal.

“Agent Crawford?” she asked, a bit disbelieving. Her posture was guarded as she waited for an answer.

“No. I’m Special Investigator Graham and this is Dr. Lecter.” introduced Will. “We’re here to talk to Mrs. Rufus,” his eyes fell to her name badge. “Officer Saltzman.”

Will showed her his badge, awkwardly flashing it before he put it away. She seemed to relax once she had seen it, letting them into the kitchen, Mrs. Rufus was sitting at the table, tissue clutched tightly in her hand, eyes puffy.

“This is Lucinda Rufus,” Saltzman introduced.

Standing so close Will could feel her sadness, the desperation to find her husband. In that moment Will felt a weight pressed upon his shoulders; he knew that being here would mean that he would have to talk to the victim’s wife, something he did not appreciate at all. He recoiled slightly, moving back to the wall when he felt Hannibal’s hand on his shoulder.

“Would you prefer that I speak with her?” Hannibal asked.

He turned, looking into hazel eyes for a moment before they dropped. A shaky nod of agreement came from Will before he said, “Please.” It would be far kinder for her to speak with Hannibal than himself.

He watched the doctor give him a smile. The way he wore it was sympathetic, yet his eyes held none as he passed him and sat at the table.

Turning, he left the room and heard quick footsteps follow; the unmistakable thud of boots that told him it was Saltzman and not Hannibal.

Pausing in the hallway, he turned and watched her shut the door of the kitchen before she came closer, taking something out of her pocket.

“Larry Rufus,” Saltzman started, Will knowing she was giving him a run down of the info they had so far, though most he knew, and what to expect in the bag she held if it was their killer. “53, white, beta… We found this. We were told to give it to you on your arrival.”

She held out a plastic bag. Inside was a piece of paper. He took the bag from her, turning it over as he read the same two words in Greek symbols: Damon and Pythias. The symbols were drawn, on paper that had been hand-crafted.

“It’s our guy. I need a few minutes alone, to look at the house.” Will said, watching officer Saltzman give him a nod before she went back to the kitchen.

Listening to Hannibal speak, he waited until the wife answered his first question then started to look around the home.

Walking silently, he took in the home. It was neat and tidy; nothing felt out of place until he see’s the two coffee tables. They are next to the couches in the large living area, one sits at each end. On the first one, the one furthest away from him, he saw a mug on the glass top of the table and a fine layer of dust. Yet the second table looked clean.

Eyes moved around the home, taking it in and the other areas, the finer details and how it was kept. Will knew now, had an understanding of how these people lived and they were going to find nothing. He walked into the kitchen where Hannibal was still talking to the widow, a hand on her shoulders as she shook, still crying.

“Did your husband ever vacuum?” he asked, not looking at her. He didn’t want to pick up her loss and pain. They were distracting.

“Wh-what?” she asked incredulously.

“Did your husband ever vacuum?”

“I… No, not really.” She shook her head, looking at Will like he was some kind of alien.

He left the room before she said anything else. He could already sense her anger at asking what she deemed a stupid question. Approaching the officer on the door, he asked for a pair of gloves, taking them and heading to the closet as Hannibal walked out and followed him with a curious expression on his face.

“What did you discover.” he asked, watching Will pull on the gloves, then open the closet door carefully.

“The house is too clean,” Will said vaguely, pulling out the vacuum as he tried to figure out how to open it. “If you look around the living room, it’s cleaner than the rest of the house. There’s no dust on the coffee table, but there is on the shelves, and the second coffee table.”

“You believe the killer cleaned up after himself?”

Pressing his hand to the vacuum, Will turned and smiled at Hannibal. The appliance was still slightly warm from recent use, and when he opened it up, the bag inside was missing. “I believe that is exactly what he did. Would you care to ask Mrs. Rufus the last time she used her vacuum?” He turned, looking at Hannibal expectedly.

There was a flash of a smirk before the doctor left. Will stayed there, holding the vacuum in his hands as he strained his ears and listened. Heard the reply: “No, Larry never vacuumed, I don’t think he knew how to even turn it on.”

It was all Will needed to hear; taking the vacuum, he set it to the side and pulled out his phone. He dialed Jack and told him to bring the team. The next phone call made his heart clench slightly, knowing he would be coming back late to pick up his son.

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“No prints,” Price spoke, standing from where he had been kneeling in front of the closet door. The fine black powder covered most of the living room and hallway after hours spent trying to find some evidence. “And I mean *nothing* . Our killer cleaned the scene and took the contents of the vacuum with him… We can take it back to the lab, pull it apart and hope that he left something, but I am doubtful. He’s covering his tracks, really well.”

“So, the killer took the victim from his house. That’s something we didn’t know before.” Jack spoke, turning to face Will as most of the team did as well. “Do you think he has done this for all the victims?”

“He’s familiar enough with them, but there will be no association with these victims… He’s killed before, I don’t know how, or when… But he knows what he is doing. He’s confident

enough in his own abilities, but these kills are different."

"Different how?" asked Jack, frowning as he put his hands on his hips.

"We're paying attention," Will shrugged as if it was the most obvious thing. "Someone like him, this level of violence, we would have seen it before in other victims… But we only have three bodies. He wants the attention. More specifically, he wants *someone's* attention."

"The killer may be looking for a friend." Hannibal spoke, looking at Jack as he gestured to the evidence bag that had been given to Will when they first arrived. Will had later shown Hannibal as they waited for the team to arrive, telling him about some of the previous murders. "The writing that this killer is leaving behind at crimes scenes is an old Greek story of an ideal friendship. Pythias was accused of plotting against Dionysius. When he was captured, he asked that he be allowed time to go and settle his affairs before his execution, and so Damon offered to stay in his place, as a hostage, until his friend returned. Dionysius was convinced that Pythias would not return, allowing Damon to be executed in his place. As the day Pythias promised to return progressed, Dionysius had prepared the execution. He was amazed when Pythias returned during the final hours to take his place. Dionysius was so moved by the friendship of the two men he granted their freedom."

"I'm not sure I follow, Dr. Lecter." spoke Jack, looking slightly confused.

"The killer is doing this for a friend… Or at least, he wants a friend." replied Will. "He's interested in another killer. From the body mutilations and this killer's style, I'd say he finds the Chesapeake Ripper fascinating and is trying to start up a conversation."

"Haven't these people ever heard or texting or Instagram?" Beverly half joked, looking shocked at the same time.

"There are easier ways to makes friends than leaving a trail of dead bodies," interjected Zeller.

"We'll continue this conversation later," Jack concluded, making the team focus their attention back on him. "Thank you, Dr. Lecter, for all your help today." He moved forward to shake the alpha's hand.

Will watched, wanting to roll his eyes at the exchange of silent words by the alphas, always thinking they knew best. Instead, he headed outside to the car, starting the engine as he waited for Hannibal to join him. Moments later, Hannibal appeared. Eyes falling to the car and seeing Will there waiting, he crossed the front yard and got into the car. Will did not even wait for him to put his seatbelt on, already heading back to Quantico.

"Would you be opposed if I offered for you to have dinner at my place tonight?" Hannibal asked, leaving the invitation open to be declined, seeing as it was on such short notice.

"No offence, Dr. Lecter, but I hardly believe your place would be suitably equipped." replied Will, not wanting to drive around with Eros too much so late at night. The boy would be fussy, his schedule interrupted due to this outing.

“Then would you allow me to follow you and cook for you both?” Hannibal requested. “I understand your reluctance to drive at such a late hour, but I would like to have a proper introduction. A chance to bond with him.”

Chewing on his bottom lip, Will finally gave a nod. He was tired, having someone else cook seemed like a bonus to him. He knew Hannibal would not want to wait for a chance to meet Eros, to hold him. It was better for them all if they conducted themselves in a civil manner and left the courts out of their affairs. He did not want to have a fight with Hannibal’s lawyer, to have child services called and to put Eros through all that. He knew what it was like from when he was younger. “I’ll give you the address now, then we need to try and talk to Jack, unless you are going to handle that alone?”

“I believe it would be best if we spoke to him together about this.” Hannibal said.

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Picking up his son, Will had a doting smile fixed on his features, one he could never fake. Walking out to the car, he chatted to the boy in hushed tones as he held him against his chest, playfully nipping at small fingers that reached to touch his mouth and run along the stubble he grew. He knew his boy was developing, had been fascinated with objects that moved and constantly reached for them and followed with his eyes. It was a good sign, and Will silently hoped that he would not inherit his empathy disorder. This was part of the reason he did not mind putting his son into daycare while he worked, hoping that the interaction would assist him as he grew, giving him exposure to socializing in a form he never had.

“I missed you, too.” Will said.

He leant in to rub his nose against Eros’s as he listened to him gurgle happily. Putting him in his car seat, he buckled him in as he spoke to him gently. “You’re going to meet your Papa tonight.” Jangling a small lion toy, he watched maroon eyes follow its movements and small hands try to grab it, knowing his son could not really understand what he was saying, but he still felt the urge to tell him and be honest with him. There was so much more he wanted to say, to tell him, but he swallowed it down, giving the toy to Eros and watching as it went straight into his mouth. He chuckled at the sight before he got in the car and headed home.

When Will arrived back at Wolf Trap, he took Eros out as he held him on his hip and opened the door, stepping aside to let the two dogs out. Winston and Zoe rushed past into the yard as Will walked in. He set his satchel down on the desk, then turned on the lights. Eros was laid down on his play mat in the middle of the living room before Will started to clean up the toys that were on the floor.

As he finished, he opened the door and whistled for the dogs. They scampered inside quickly, nails clicking against the wooden floor but settling down quickly. Winston paused by Will’s side after coming in, sitting down as he moved his head under Will’s hand, receiving an absent scratch behind the ears before the dog moved away again. Will watched his faithful companion sit down on the floor next to Eros. Upon hearing a squeak, Will turned to see Zoe taking off with one of the plastic toys, it explained why many of them never stayed in one place.

Finally, he came to sit down at the kitchen table, looking at his laptop while keeping an eye on Eros, Zoe and Winston. He missed having all of his dogs, but having two was far easier than the seven he had originally. He couldn't have them all at home with a baby, it was a recipe for disaster. With a heavy heart he had started looking for good homes for them when he was six months along, relieved when five of them had new families when Eros had been born. Zoe and Winston had been funny about people, but considering Zoe's small size and how quiet and well behaved they both were, he tried them for a few weeks while he had his leave. They never had a single problem. Zoe tended to keep her distance from Eros, but Winston was always by the boy's side. The bigger dog was so patient and caring with him, even when small hands poked, prodded and pulled, he never growled; he would only move away. Will found he enjoyed watching his son with Winston, taking a few pictures of the pair. He had a favorite one set as his wall paper, Eros smiling at the camera while sitting in between Winston's front legs.

When Will saw headlights coming down his driveway, he closed the laptop. Coming back to the living room where he picked up Eros and held him gently on his hip, the pair walking to the door. He paused, a hand on the doorknob as he took a deep breath before he opened it. He knew he had to be nice for his son's sake.

Hannibal was already half way up the steps, a bag in his hand as he moved closer. "Good evening, Will… Eros."

"You don't have to be so formal," Will sighed, though he did smile as he felt Eros moving, trying to keep his eyes on the new person.

Stepping through the door, the dogs didn't pay any attention to Hannibal, considering Will was there greeting him, they merely put their heads back down and went to sleep again.

"The kitchen is just in there, I don't have much in the cupboards at the moment for us."

"I brought my own, including something that I am sure you will enjoy." Hannibal spoke, setting down the bag. "May I?" he asked, smiling at Eros.

"Yeah," Will said, lifting the boy as he felt something tighten around his heart. Placing him into Hannibal's open and waiting arms, he took a step back and watched.

Gently, Hannibal lifted the boy, bringing him in close to his body as he looked down upon him. Will saw something in his eyes, something so raw and beautiful as Hannibal smiled so softly at their son. Eros seemed to be enjoying it too, gurgling as he grabbed onto Hannibal's coat and pulled himself closer before he grabbed onto the paisley tie hidden underneath. Small fingers yanked on the fabric, which he then directed it towards his mouth.

"Ok," Will said, hand coming out to take the tie before it was destroyed by drool. "I don't think he wants his tie ruined."

"Who knows?" replied Hannibal, smiling at Will now. "One could say he has a taste for design."

Will couldn't help but to laugh at that, letting go of the tie as he walked into the kitchen. "Then you can feed this one at dinner time, he normally becomes quite the artist. Though he does sometimes prefer to play with his food."

"Ah," replied Hannibal, bouncing the boy as he followed his father. "It seems we are more alike than you think."

"Do you enjoy playing with your food, Dr. Lecter?" smirked Will.

"Only certain meats." Hannibal spoke, a flash of teeth in his smile before he watched the baby shove his tie into his mouth. "It seems he is still very curious."

Will grabbed a clean bottle from the cupboard, adding the formula and water to it before attaching the nipple. He started to shake it, combining the ingredients, turning to look at what Hannibal was referring to. He couldn't help but to pull his phone out of his pocket, quickly snapping a pic. "No doubt you will claim that he has inherited that from you as well." He chuckled, putting the bottle down as he went over to save the tie. "I'm going to put him down for the night, he already had dinner while we were still at the scene. Saves me dealing with a fussy man, we shouldn't be too long."

There was a nod from Hannibal, watching Will extract Eros from his hold. The boy cling to his father, attention easily diverted as Will smiled down at their son, picking up the bottle and heading upstairs, pausing halfway to add "Feel free to use anything you find in the fridge, or pantry."

Being given free rein over the kitchen, Hannibal opened the bag he had brought. Taking out the fresh cut of 'pork' heart, carrots, shallots, garlic and a ripe tomato, setting them on the bench as he selected a frying pan. The kitchen was nowhere near up to his own standard, but he had a reasonable space to work in, at least.

It was light work to prepare the pieces he needed to add to the stew he already brought. It simply needed to be reheated and have fresh vegetables added. As he started chopping the carrots and putting them into a pot that was boiling to soften, he heard soft cries from upstairs and Will's voice trying to soothe their son. Washing his hands, he left the dinner, turning the stove off before started to climb the stairs silently, finally standing at the top as he peeked into the room he could hear whimpers coming from.

He peeked in through the door that had been left ajar, watching Will leaning over a small crib, a hand inside no doubt trying to calm their son as he hummed gently. His smile was so carefree, at peace with everything in a way that Hannibal had not seen him before. Watching from behind the door, he felt a possessive urge. He should be in there with Will, a hand around his hip as lips pressed to the man's temple, listening to him hum and sing. It was obvious from the way Will acted with the child that he had desired a family, but there was something stopping him. A part of Will that did not allow Hannibal in and a reason as to why he had kept this a secret. Tonight, he would discover the reason. It was better to do it now than wait; he wanted to know before he got any closer to Will.

Backing away from the sight quietly, Hannibal headed down stairs, his mind occupied more by the thought of his son and Will. He had killed people for lesser rudeness, and in that

moment he was giving serious thought to removing Will from the picture. He could not deny that learning he had a son had brought out a paternal instinct in him, something he had not experienced for years. One he would ensure had a better outcome than the last.

Plating the meals, Hannibal set them on the table to cool as he started to clean the kitchen. Will walked down only a few minutes later, empty bottle in hand that he took to the sink and began to clean.

“He gets a little difficult if he misses his afternoon nap.” Will spoke absent mindedly, putting the clean bottle in the dish rack to dry before he came to sit at the table. His eyes instantly fell to the wine glasses Hannibal had put out, a smiling appearing on his lips as he watched Hannibal open a bottle of red.

“It is always difficult with children to establish a routine, more so when you are working full time and returning to the field, I imagine.” Hannibal said, setting the bottle of red down and allowing it to breathe. “How long have you been back teaching?”

“Since he was three months… If I have to go out to a scene, well, the daycare is organized for it. Jack asked me to work the field when we were handed this case this week.” spoke Will, a little defensive.

“It seems like Jack is asking for your assistance on more than just this case alone,” replied Hannibal, sitting down. “Barigoule of pork heart stew, something to help warm you from the inside… My butcher found his heart to have a better use here than in the sty he enjoyed living in.”

“Does your butcher always tell you about the life the animals lead before their slaughter?” Will smiled, picking up his fork as he speared a piece of the meat and brought it to his lips, pausing to hear Hannibal’s reply first.

“Are you afraid I might go bacon your heart?” smiled Hannibal.

“That has to be the worst pun I have ever heard,” laughed Will.

Hannibal bowed his head, though still pleased at getting a laugh and smile from the man before him. “He hunts, a tradition that is lost in today’s lifestyle. Free range meat sourced from the wild holds a different flavor to domesticated animals that are raised for slaughter.”

“He must own his own property, then.” Will finally tasted the meat, chewing slowly.

Unable to look away, Hannibal watched Will eat, tasting the very meat he had hunted before he gave a tiny smile. “He allows the animals to live life to their fullest until he is in need of meat, then he only kills what he needs… Though some of his stock is reared simply for slaughter, fed a strict diet to enhance their flavor.”

“Well, this is delicious.” Will took another bite, closing his eyes

Hannibal was satisfied with the result of his labour and the rewards he was reaping. “Would you care for a glass of wine?”

“Please,” replied Will, watching the doctor pour his glass first before his own.

They ate in silence, the knife and fork occasionally scraping against the plate and the red wine slowly dwindling. Once they were finished, Will took both plates and put them in the sink to wash up later, Hannibal pouring what was left of the wine into their glasses.

“May I ask why you did not inform me about Eros?” Hannibal spoke, offering Will’s glass for him to take.

Fingers closed around the stem as Will walked into the living room, sitting down on the couch. He followed Hannibal’s movements as he sat down at the other end, at least giving him space. He closed his eyes for a moment before lifting the glass to take a swig of the wine.

“Were you planning on trying to loosen my tongue with wine to hear my reasons as to why?”

“Not at all, I was merely curious. You seem comfortable in the role of being a single parent, one most would find daunting.” Hannibal placated.

Licking his lips, he sipped on the wine once again before answering, believing it was best to tell the truth. “My mother abandoned me and my father. It’s unusual to have an omega parent abandon their child, but she did, when I was still very little. Left a note… My father raised me, as best he could… Given my profession now, they way I know people talk about me behind my back, who would want an omega like me?” The last was said with a bitter laugh, trying to hide the hurt that Will had truly felt most of his life.

It had not been easy being the only male omega in his school, being raised by an alpha who did not know how to help his son with his first heat. After that, things had only become worse for him. Alphas looked at him differently, started to follow him around. Will could see through them. Most of them only wanted to fuck him so they could brag about it to their friends; given how rare male omegas were, they were seen as a prize.

But the strange Will Graham who could empathize with anyone was not a prize. He had always felt like a freak show. Simply there for the entertainment of others. He had given up on having a relationship quite quickly, the idea of raising a family. When he had heats now, he stayed home. The only action he had was flings, one night stands with strangers. It was less complicated than having a partner or being expected to conform to something that made him uncomfortable. The people who he could best associate with were killers, because he had studied them for so long. They were simpler to him, easier to understand and he did not have to form emotional attachments.

“I find you quite interesting,” Hannibal said after a pause.

Will narrowed his eyes at the man, unbelieving. “Was that before or after you fucked me?” Having to say it, because he felt like he knew where this was going. There were rumours that true mates could impregnate their mate outside of heat. They also said that about thoroughbred alphas, of which he was sure Hannibal was. Thoroughbred carried the homozygous gene, something most omegas’ would desire, it would enable them to only give birth to alpha or omega children.

“Both. I find your insight fascinating, not simply because of your gender. You have a rare gift.”

He listened, taking in the sincerity of Hannibal’s words but not really believing him. “I think I’ll be calling it a night… Thank you for dinner.”

Hannibal bowed his head, understanding Will had had enough for one day and that things at least ended on a good note. “It was my pleasure. I hope I will be able to invite you over to my home. Though I would very much enjoy making this a weekly occurrence.”

“It would be good to alternate, we can have dinner at yours next time. I’d prefer that he gets to know you before we start talking about… more.”

“One step at a time, but I look forward to getting to know our son better.” Hannibal smiled, standing. “You do not teach on weekends. Allow me to invite you over for lunch on Saturday, it will give you a chance to unwind while knowing Eros is safe.”

Thinking for a moment, it was only the start of the week. “I can do Saturdays… Alana has spoken highly of you. I’m just—” Will said, stumbling on the last part.

“You’re being protective, which is perfectly understandable and something I admire. I can sleep well knowing Eros is being cared for.” Hannibal finished for him, knowing what Will was going through was a normal paternal bond that omegas had to their children. “Until Saturday, Will. I’ll send you my address.”

Will helped the man pack up, holding the door open for him and watching him get in the car while he let Zoe and Winston out for the last time that night. He could not help but to stay, watching until he could no longer see headlights. He finally went back inside, looking at the case they had for the executioner before he went to bed.

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It was cold. The factory was dark as he walked the empty passageway, lips pursed together, whistling the lullaby of rock-a-bye baby as he carried heavy weights in each hand and headed towards a lit room. He could see the light spilling from the gap at the bottom of the door. As he walked, the sound of muffled screaming grew louder. He stopped whistling now, smiling as he listened to the sounds of distress until he reached the door.

Opening the door easily, hearing it swing as hinges screeched, his eyes fell to the centre of the room where the lights were directed. The wooden horse was illuminated, and the man who sat upon it. His hands were tied above his head, a gag around his mouth.

As he moved closer, he saw what the wooden horse truly was. It was known as the Spanish donkey. The pyramid seat was long, with the narrow end facing up where his victim sat. Metal spikes had been placed along the narrow edge, designed to cut and splice.

His third victim .

Dean Gregory sat there, screaming behind the gag, watching as he approached.

Will was silent as he took the weights, bringing each up to tie around Dean's leg, strapping it on firmly before he moved to the other and repeated the process. When both were secure, he took a chain and connected it to both the weights, forcing Dean's legs closer together, but that is not all the chain was for. As he listened to the renewed screams, hearing the pain in Dean's voice he smiled, feeling the cold air against his bare teeth as he took a step back.

"I want you to look at me while I decide." said Will, moving back to the wall where a lever was waiting. "I want you to beg me for your life, not with words, but with your eyes. I want to see the light leave them, knowing that the person I do this for would enjoy that moment as well."

Will gently eased the lever down, feeling the vibration through it, hearing the gentle clunk of metal gears grinding and watching the chains attached to the weights begin to click. A reel started to take up the slack, pulling it in and winding it taut until he lifted the lever again to stop it. He smiled. It was pleasing for him to watch this, knowing what would come next.

Suddenly, he forced the lever down all the way, watching as the man struggled and fought uselessly. His legs were pulled down by the weights and the chains, his muffled screams of terror filling the room, followed by a sickening crack of bone and the sound of flesh ripping from the body.

Will tsked, lifting the lever again and stopping the chains from rattling as he moved forward to try and figure out where he went wrong. He moved past human legs, stepping over the blood spilling onto the floor, and looked up at the still corpse of the man held limply by his bound wrists. He would have to rethink his design if he wanted to split a man in half. It was not adequate as is.

But why could he still hear screaming?

The room shifted, lights vanishing as he heard barks mingling with cries, mind racing until one thought suddenly only entered his mind: Eros.

Will blinked rapidly, taking in his front porch, hearing dogs scratching at the door behind him. He didn't even think, turning to race back inside, taking the stairs two at a time until he opened the door to his son's room. He lifted Eros into his arms as he started to talk to him. Hearing the tremor in his voice, the chill from the sweat on his skin, he took the blanket from the cot and bundled Eros in it, placating him and trying to calm himself for the sake of the baby.

Eventually Eros quieted down as Will walked., It chilled him to think about the fact he had been sleepwalking, that he left Eros alone. Pressing lips to his son's forehead, he gently whispered, "Daddy's never gonna leave you, I promise." He couldn't let this happen again.

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"He's your son?" Jack said, eyebrows raised as he looked from Hannibal to Will and then back to Hannibal. "And you are only just informing me of this now!"

"I didn't tell him before this Jack." Will said remorsefully, looking down at the floor instead of meeting his boss's eyes. He could practically feel the anger washing over him as he sat there.

"I've already written a letter and sent it to the HR department, so they are aware of our relationship, though it should not interfere with the work we do as we are not bonded." Hannibal spoke, thinking on how he could change the last of that. He fully intended to have Will as his omega, given how their biology fitted to each other.

"How did this happen?!" Jack's voice boomed, hand clenching into a fist.

"How did we make a baby?" Will said, a slight tilt of his head with raised eyebrows, watching Jack recoil slightly.

"I—you know that is not what I meant." Replied Jack, letting out a long exhale as he composed himself. "You can go back to class, Will."

Standing, Will left the room. The door slamming shut behind him to make his anger at the situation known. Jack closed his eyes for a second, then looked at Hannibal, pointing at the man. "You were brought in to assist Will for this case. It is the first case he has worked in the field, and I have the higher ups breathing down the back of my neck about making an omega work active field duty. This was the reason I brought you in, for your professional capacity."

"I'm simply having conversations with Will, nothing more. But I can refer him to a colleague who could help." Hannibal spoke, knowing who would fit his own needs best. The closer he had Will to him, however, the better it would be for him. Will would pick up on his scent, making his hormones respond, drawing Will closer to him.

Yet if he denied those biological urges, it would wreak havoc on his physiology. Both possibilities fascinated Hannibal. He had read about omegas contracting different diseases due to fighting their nature, causing the omega's body to attack itself. Similar to an autoimmune disease, but treatable and with a high success rate.

"Good. That will give me room to work with, and I can keep you on. Have there been any developments?" Jack sat back in his chair, at least knowing one problem was taken care of.

"Nothing of value yet, but I will speak to you if something comes up." Hannibal spoke, standing from his seat. "Good day, Jack."

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A week had passed. When they had not found the body within a few days, Will was not surprised. Since his first sleep walking episode, there had been a repeat every night. Going to sleep was becoming more difficult with each day. The nights he had not been sleepwalking, his thrashing and screams had woken Eros. Other nights he found himself waking, standing somewhere in the house or outside. It was starting to concern him. Despite knowing the source of the nightmares, he was still performing his job.

He didn't want to appear weak, to be a coddled omega. But it had impacted him. The previous Saturday where he was supposed to meet at Hannibal's, he had to cancel because he was exhausted, telling the doctor he had papers to grade while he tried to catch up on sleep. He had only seen him twice since their dinner together, more for the alpha's benefit of seeing Eros. He had paused on the way out the last time, looking concerned at Will.

"How are you sleeping?" asked Hannibal, seeing the bags under Will's eyes.

"If I could bundle myself up in a sleeping bag it would be far kinder," Will laughed, earning him a displeased look from Hannibal. "It's been difficult the last few nights, he's been a bit colicky." Will ended up lieing, holding Eros a little tighter.

"Would you like to spend the weekend at my house? Or perhaps I could stay here a few nights—"

"We're fine, he'll settle." Will continued to lie, not wanting Hannibal to see him sleepwalking or know that he frightened Eros at night. He pulled his son closer, breathing in the fresh scent

of baby powder and No Tears shampoo; it was comforting and so utterly horrifying at the same time because he felt like he was failing his son.

“Well, if you need anything, please let me know. I want to help you, Will, both of you.” Hannibal placated, but he could see the fractures that were appearing before him, how Will was breaking. And Will could see him understanding.

He ended up pushing Hannibal out the door nearly before he closed it with a hurried goodbye. He didn’t think on it again, despite a desire to call Hannibal, to ask for help, there was a fear in doing so. The very next day, Hannibal sent a message with a number for another psychiatrist, told him it was all covered and he did not have to worry about anything. But of course Will did, the father of his son was sending him a referral, in a way. And if Will did not go, it could harm him in the future if Hannibal tried to get custody.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

> Thank you to the lovely @Fataldrum/fatal-fic for beta reading and helping spur on ideas as well as all my other lovely friends who spur me on and motivate me to write or just bat ideas around!
>
> Without your encouragement, your banter and some of our crazy ideas, I would be as slow as a snail in writing! :D

Gravel crunched under Will's feet as he walked to the front door of Dr. Bedelia Du Maurier's office. He had not missed how beautiful and elegant the home had looked from the outside, or the trendy neighborhood, not to mention the Bentley Continental that was visible in the garage. When he reached the door, fingers closed around the cold brass knocker, rapping three times to alert the woman to his presence.

The door opened only seconds later, revealing a beautiful woman with blonde hair and a blue blouse that matched her eyes. Her gaze travelled over Will, taking in his unkempt hair, the shadow under his eyes and the wrinkles in his suit. Bedelia gave a tiny smirk as she opened her door and welcomed Will into her home.

Inside the house, it was far grander and larger than Will had presumed it would be. He followed Bedelia, not missing the light perfume she wore to enhance her natural omega scent

"How long have you been retired?" asked Will, watching Bedelia sit as he took the seat opposite. "It is unusual for a doctor to invite a patient into their home."

"I suspect you are more used to the unorthodox than the standard norm." smiled Bedelia, adjusting her skirt. "Hannibal asked me to take you on, as a patient, he did not specify."

"We were simply having conversations," Will clarifies, wondering how much Hannibal spoke of their relationship to the woman. "It would perhaps be better if I was seeing you as a patient, doctor… Doctor-patient confidentiality."

"You may call me Bedelia if it makes you feel more comfortable," she answered, giving him a strained smile. "Whatever you spoke to Hannibal about, he has not shared the details with me. These sessions are for your benefit, not his."

"Considering he is the one who requested I participate in these, I find that hard to believe, Bedelia."

"What do you find hard to believe?" she pressed, gaining a small insight into Will from that sentence. "His concern for you? Or for himself?" Her eyes fell to Will's hand, which had

clenched into a fist.

“What possible concern could Hannibal Lecter have for me?” Will laughed, looking away. “I’m simply a surrogate to him, I do not fit into his world.”

“You believe he is using these sessions to build a case against you to take custody of your child.” She paused, bowing her head slightly to acknowledge this. “This is why you wish to invoke doctor-patient rights.”

“I’d rather not have you talk about me to your... psychiatrist friends.”

Relaxing in her chair, Bedelia gave him an open smile. “You are my only patient now, and I do not speak about my patients with my colleagues, or those who think they are my friends.”

“I see.” smiled Will, turning back to look at her. “That must be quite upsetting for those who think they are the former.”

“Yes, but this is your time.” Bedelia spoke.

Will saw the shift, the change from casual talking to analysis. At least Bedelia was direct. He understood why Hannibal had given her number to him. “Time seems to be the focus of my life at the moment, or the loss of it.”

“Have you been losing time?”

“It’s hard to keep track of when you have a baby,” Will shrugged it off, though his comment on time was not all about his son. But there had been some small incidents where he had lost an hour or a bit more, unable to recall his movements. He blamed the sleep walking, the insomnia, but something kept poking at him more about it. The nightmares had been getting worse; a shadowy figure had been following him, and not only when he was asleep. He had caught the glimpse of antlers and feathers a few times until it finally appeared to him and revealed itself.

“Yes, Eros I believe.” Bedelia smiled. “Hannibal told me briefly about him, that you had been raising him alone. Something most omegas would not do.”

“No,” Will tried to keep the snarl out of his tone. “Most tend to bond to the alpha father, or there are shotgun bondings as well.” He leant forward a little in his chair. “Do you honestly believe that someone like Hannibal Lecter would take me as a mate, have me at his side for the rest of our lives?”

“You did not give him the opportunity to answer that question, instead you chose for him by deciding to keep it a secret… What were you going to tell your son when he asked about his father?”

There was a genuine shrug, unsure of what he would have done because he had not thought that far ahead.

“You seem to have a rather low opinion of yourself.” Bedelia spoke, her tone cautious. “You seem certain that no alpha would want you, despite being a male omega… you may believe it

to be your empathy disorder makes it difficult...”

Will could feel his eyebrows jump up, surprise written on his features before he remembered the article that Freddie Lounds had published about him.

“Yet you can still maintain a steady job and raise a child which is a credit to you. It seems as though you read too much into the negative emotions that others have about you.”

“There is a lot of talk about my ability to think like others.”

“You may hear their thoughts, but you are not able to change what others may think about you, Will. You need to find a way to deal with your negative thoughts.”

“You must be aware that male omegas tend to have traits that are amplified,”

Bedelia gave him a look of understanding, a silent look Will could read easily. *Do you believe you are the only person who can empathise with others?*

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The call from Jack came early in the morning. Will had been up already, taking a shower as he washed his feet of the mud that had gathered there. In his dream, he vaguely remembered following the stag out into the forest, waking to find himself outside. He had breathed a sigh of relief when he found Eros safely asleep.

As he spoke to Jack, he noticed his alpha boss’s tone was hard, but he knew the reason why when the words ‘the Ripper’ were spoken.

“I take it you are on your way to pick me up, then?” asked Will, grabbing clothes as he spoke.

“Yes, Hannibal is on his way as well. Though he is going to stay at your place, I could not get onto Louise.” Jack said.

Will knew what that meant. Anger rose within him at Jack deciding what was best for his son. He wanted to yell at Jack, what gave the man the right to decide who was best to look after Eros? He gave a sarcastic huff on the phone. “Why don’t you take Dr. Lecter, I’m sure you would be far happier with his professional opinion than mine.”

“Will, I want to catch him. You’ve never been to one of the crime scenes, and I want you to see it fresh. Undisturbed. .”

“Fine.” he growled, hanging the phone up before Jack could say anymore.

As he sipped on his coffee, he stuck instructions on the fridge, hearing the cars coming down his driveway. He waited until they parked. At least Hannibal was the only one who greeted him at the door.

Will was surprised to see what Hannibal was dressed in. Gone was his suit and the paisley ties, instead he was wearing dark slacks and a knitted red cashmere sweater, his hair swept gracefully down across his forehead. It looked as though he had just been woken up. In truth,

Will had wanted to yell at Hannibal when he came to his house when he learned he was on his way, but now he couldn't. He understood Jack had pulled him out more because he could not get Louise, the next best substitute was most likely Hannibal.

"Come in," Will spoke, opening the door a little wider and shooting a glare to Jack who was waiting in the SUV.

"My apologies Will, I—"

"I know," Will said, holding a hand up. "His morning routine is up on the fridge for you, he probably won't be up for about another hour and a bit. If you have any problems, call me. If anything goes wrong, or if you can't get hold of me, there are different numbers on the fridge."

"We'll be fine, Will." Hannibal spoke, hand coming to touch his shoulder. "I'll keep you informed and send you photos."

Taking a shaky breath, Will nodded. "I'm sorry you got dragged into this."

"I got here on my own," smiled Hannibal before he added a quiet, "go."

Will gave a weak smile, leaving the house and getting into the car. He looked back, watching it until he couldn't see it anymore, then turned to talk to Jack about the case.

"What brought the Ripper out?" he asked, curious to hear Jack's thoughts, provided they were not clouded by the last time the Ripper had been active. Miriam Lass was still listed as missing, though most considered her dead.

"That is what I want you to tell me." Jack answered.

Looking over, Will could read that hard expression, unblinking eyes as hands held the steering wheel. They were speeding, no sirens or lights on. He knew how bad Jack wanted to catch the Ripper.,and that he would be a fresh set of eyes for the man at the scene.

"This will mean he is starting his sounder," he spoke, running a hand through his hair as he thought on more scenes and victims. When he came back to the field it was more to exclusively work on the executioner case, but the opportunity to see a Ripper murder, to feel his presence was something Will could not deny was exciting. "He may be communicating, with us or the executioner. He always has in his own way, he shows off his skill, his talent. There are not many he could share that with, but he has always taunted us."

"I don't care, I just want to catch this son of a bitch." growled Jack.

Will could understand why, after what the Ripper had taken from him. He didn't dare speak, though, sitting silent in the car until they arrived. A feeling of nostalgia washed over Will as he looked at the tall, dilapidated building.

"Are you sure this is the Ripper?" Will instantly asked, recognising the old Canton grain elevator. His father had worked here years ago for a week, when Will had just come of age. It

was responsible for loading grain off ships. There had been a number of ships that came through the area before they started to decline during the eighties.

“That’s what you here to find out.”

Silently, he left the car and followed, watching Jack talk to the one cop that was one the scene, who had made the gruesome discovery. It was only early light, the sun poking through the clouds as the sound and smell of the ocean greeted him. This did not feel like the Ripper; he had always chosen places of interest, or something that related to his victims. There was flair in his design, the need for attention to strike fear into the city and make people talk.

How would he achieve that here?

Jack turned a corner, Will only a few steps behind as he followed. What he saw made him pause.

There was a boat, over turned and covered in marine growth, but the barnacles on it were large, jagged. The man was draped over it, staring up at the sky. As Will came closer, he could see why restraints were not needed to keep the body in place.

Someone with skill had been able to lift the growth from the boat, placing the hands and feet underneath. His torso was bare; he had been gutted completely, and some of the larger barnacles looked as though they had been used to impale the body. Walking to the other side, Will looked into the empty torso. There was not a single organ left, but barnacles lined the cavity, ones that had been grown, planted there. Cultivated.

This level of design took time, patience, skill and privacy. Though there were no nails or screws holding him in place, Will had to guess there was some form of glue assisting his design. Given the Ripper’s previous crimes, he would hazard a guess at medical grade adhesive.

On the man’s body however, there were cuts and scrapes, as though he had been dragged. Then it clicked.

“Keelhauling.” Will said, his memory casting back to years ago on this very dock where he listened to a man tell him about a punishment used on sailors by pirates. He remembered because he was young, he had an eye infection that resulted in his needing a patch, and the man had joked he was now an official pirate. He had researched it later, understanding the history of the punishment and where it had originated.

“What?” Jack said, turning to look at Will.

“Our victim,” Will moved closer and staring into the victim’s mouth. “He died of mutilation. The rest of these wounds are post mortem. But the desired effect is for him to appear as though he was keelhauled… It was a punishment used at sea. It started during ancient Greek times. A sailor would be tied to a rope that looped around the vessel, underneath it, then they were dragged. It was an agonising punishment; if they were dragged fast, they could die from blood loss or limbs being detached, but if they went slow, they drowned.” “The Ripper took

what he wanted first, letting is victim die before he put him on display. The killing wasn't here, but he knew about this place. But why would he pick a place that is abandoned?"

"You're sure it's the Ripper?" Jack pushed, needing to know the answer.

Will only nodded, watching Jack leave as he made a call. He looked closer, he couldn't help but to admire the skill involved and the level of difficulty to pull off a scene like this.

"Team is on it's way, but the story is out already." Jack told Will, his face turning a nasty shade of red from anger. "Turns out the Ripper was waiting for us to find our victim. He just uploaded a picture of the crime scene...with the victim's Twitter account! Bev's putting a trace on his phone." He shook his head."The damn thing is starting to go viral with the Ripper's message."

"What message was so important to send to us?" Will was perplexed, while the Ripper had left messages before, they had never been written. This was a different stage he was using, a wider audience he was reaching. It played to the Ripper's ego, but given his level of intelligence, Will knew they would not hold many clues to assist in tracking him down.

"Bev's sending it to you," Jack answered, frustration starting to wear on him already. They had not been at the scene for more than ten minutes, and the Ripper was already under his skin.

Instead of waiting, Will took out his phone and searched. It was not difficult to find. He looked at the photo, the obvious display for the executioner and the message below. *They say you should keep your friends close, but your enemies closer… You know me, see me. I am between who you are and what you want to be.*

There was a dismissal for the opportunity at friendship written, a focus upon someone else. The Ripper had his sights set on someone, one that considered themselves an enemy to the Ripper in a way, but the Ripper saw them as something else. He looked to Jack, then back to the scene. He could feel pieces clicking, not complete, but it was making the hair on the back of his neck stand. Could the Ripper know he was going to be involved in the investigation? Was this scene purely for him? It just felt too coincidental.

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"No fingerprints, no DNA… The Ripper left us nothing. Even the picture that was taken provided no new information. It was shot the day before and was set up to upload the photo the next day, just after the tip came into the police. This was set up, in true Ripper style." Beverly said, handing over the phone records. "The SIM card looks like it was removed, I followed the cell signal, the last to time it was used which looked to be near or at Geoffrey Lawrence's home. The Ripper is smart enough to turn off the phone there, probably took the SIM out there too before setting it up at the scene. Jack's sending us over to the vic's home this afternoon."

"Thanks." Will took the report from her, flicking through it to look briefly. "You said the message the Ripper posted came from his own phone, do we know where it is located?"

“Yeah, not the most charming of places… But when I looked through it, I could understand why.” Beverly said, walking over to where x-rays were already up. Clearly showing the victim’s pelvis, and an object that appeared to be a phone. “I did get some of the details for the dating app he used, printed off a few of the messages and his profile. Our vic liked his fancy restaurants and other cultured events. He also enjoyed posing as an omega despite being a beta. You could say the Ripper was offended. The way we found the phone, well, it would have been where we find the juncture in an omega to connect to the womb.”

“Do you believe he was pointing out he could not make an alpha knot him properly?” Will said, wondering. Considering the size of the phone, it could have been a message. He knew in a way the Ripper had to be an alpha, perhaps he was offended at someone pretending to be what they were not.

“Yeah,” agreed Beverly. “Despite what you may think, given the location. It was done post mortem and inserted through the torso, not his anus. There was nothing sexual about this.”

“I don’t see anything sexual about the crimes or our victims when I look at the Ripper, though he may enjoy what he does. It’s more about his ego, his skill, the level of intelligence he has. It’s a game.”

“I think that’s scarier than someone doing it for sexual release.” Beverly shook her head. “They have emotions you can read. He just gives me the chills.”

Will wanted to agree with Beverly, but he said nothing. When he looked at the scenes, he never got chills; instead, he had a sense of power. It was more disturbing to him because he found himself wanting to experience that power firsthand at times. Despite knowing it was wrong. The Ripper was something else.

“Talking about chills, I finally was able to determine the paper our Executioner is using.”

“Hmm?” Will spoke. “I’m guessing from that tone I’m not going to like what you found.”

“Nor did Jack.” Beverly said gravely. “The one good thing is, he has to be making it himself, but that leaves us with no new leads as into where he may be. It’s a really old school method.”

“From medieval times?” Will said, unsurprised. “It seems to be his thing.”

“Yeah, well.” Beverly said, moving to the microscope and looking down as she focused the image. “They didn’t really have paper back then, they had what you would define more as a manuscript.”

“Please tell me he is not writing on human skin.”

“No, though it perhaps could have been much easier, or less time consuming. It’s handmade.”

“How is he making it?” Will queried, wondering what depth the killer had gone to for his kills.

“The fabric is cut down to small sizes, put in a tub, mixed with liquid. It was a long process to get the material to the stage it was diluted enough to start making sheets, they used a sieve to separate the fibres and normally the flat sieve would act as the mould for the paper. A single sheet of this paper could weigh from forty grams to three hundred.”

“But you at least know the material he is using, then?”

Beverly gave him a wide smile, crossing her arms in front of her like. “Cotton fibres, and not just any. These are quality materials, and we’re looking for someone who may have bought it raw. The paper from the scenes is all part of the same piece. He may have only made one sheet… Or he brought it.”

There was a nod from Will, returning the smile. “I sense you told Jack the good news and he is looking into it and getting names and lists of people who brought this type of paper.”

“You bet. That is, if the killer did not do this himself.”

“It would not surprise me at this stage, he enjoys being hands on.” Will lamented. “Let’s just hope Jack turns up something before we find Larry Rufus’s body.”

There was nothing said at Will’s remark, the man had been missing for a few days and with the Ripper now publicly declining an offer for friendship, he knew it would push the Executioner to kill his victim.

“How was your little man with his papa this morning?” Beverly asked, trying to change the subject to something more pleasant.

It made Will smile, he had gotten a photo from Hannibal while still at the scene of Eros smiling for the camera. “He’s good, taking everything really well, which is a relief. I didn’t know how he would handle it, but there have been no issues.”

“You must be relieved at that.” Beverly spoke, coming over to hold out her hand. “Hand them over.” She smiled wickedly, making Will laugh as he took out his phone and let her flick through his photos.

He watched her face, seeing that genuine smile his son always brought out in people. It was something he loved most about his son.

“So when am I coming over to babysit while you two go out on date night?”

“There is not going to be a date night.”

“Oh come on, Graham, you deserve an evening to yourself.” Beverly spoke, still wearing that wicked smile.

“I know what you’re doing,” smiled Will in return.

“Maybe, but I presume you were receiving an invitation to Hannibal’s dinner party. Jack opened one this morning when I was in the office.”

Rolling his eyes, Will looked back at Beverly with shake of his head, smiling. “Not yet, but if Jack is getting an invitation to his party, I’m sure there will be an offer for me. I didn’t even know about it until now.”

“Well,” she said, all to pleased. “Now you do, and you can ask for another. I want to know the alpha responsible for making this.” She held up the phone with a picture of Eros smiling.

“I make no promises.” Will took back his phone.

“Yeah, well. It looks like you could use a break,” Her eyes roamed over his features, his clothing, taking in his tired appearance. “Maybe having Hannibal around is not such a bad thing after all. At least you don’t have to feel guilty about calling to ask him. I get the impression, more from this morning he wants to be a part of his life.”

“It’s not as simple as just coming in and playing happy families.”

“Who said he was playing, maybe that is what he wants. I’ve seen him, with you. He only has eyes for you.”

Feeling his cheeks heat, he looked down, putting his phone away as he looked at his watch. “I better go see Jack,” He spoke, heading for the door to getaway.

“You can’t ignore the elephant in the room, Will!” Beverly teased as she watched him walk out, waving to her as he left. She laughed to herself at Will’s reaction, like a teenage boy not sure of what to do with the person he had a crush on.

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The very next morning, Jack came to himg, entering the class as Alana hurried behind. Will knew instantly that Larry Rufus’s body had been found from the expressions they wore. He followed Jack from the classroom, getting into the SUV and riding to the location in silence. It was another abandoned factory in Baltimore, a theme that this killer had started to establish. A pattern. His behaviour was starting to show, but only what he wanted the FBI to see. By now he knew of their involvement thanks to Freddie Lounds plastering it all over her blog.

Jack parked next to the cop cars that were there waiting, lights on. They had not been into the scene yet, leaving it for them to handle. It was eerily quiet; the factory’s brick walls had collapsed in certain areas to reveal the building, opening it to the elements, grass and moss growing inside and around it as birds and other wildlife used it as a habitat to raise their families. One half of the roof was caved in, but Will prepared himself for what he was about to find. He wondered what device the killer had used this time. Would he still be experimenting with medieval torture devices similar to the Spanish donkey, or had he found something more worthwhile?

He opened them slowly, stifling a yawn that wanted to escape.

“Where’s your head at?” Jack spoke, looking at Will.

“On my pillow,” replied Will, rubbing at his eyes as he thought on the past few nights.

“Well,” Jack said, stepping out of the car. “I have just the thing to wake you up.” Looking behind Will he watched the other SUV pull up, Beverly, Zeller and Price stepping out to come and join them.

“What makes you know this was our killer, Jack?” Zeller asked, joining them.

“Someone passing by came to investigate when they heard strange animal calls coming from the building. Thinking it was injured, they investigated and found our scene. They didn’t touch anything, but they’re pretty shaken. Lucky for us they knew what this was.”

“And what is that exactly?” Beverly asked.

Jack walked, leading them to the door where an officer opened it for them. “Have you ever heard of the brazen bull?”

“Where a person was placed inside a copper bull statue and roasted alive?” Zeller asked. “It’s the kind of barbeque I avoid an invite to.”

“Well, we just got front row seats.” Jack said, holding a hand up for the team to stop. He pulled on a set of gloves before opening the door, letting Will step past him silently to view the scene.

“How do we know the guy inside is even dead?” Beverly asked

“The FBI didn’t want police disturbing the scene, one of the other forensic techs was sent down, used a camera to look inside, where we saw the body.”

Nothing more was said; it didn’t need to be. They all knew there was no real question as to who lay inside the bull. Unless the Executioner had taken another person, which they doubted.

Feeling his mouth go dry, Will entered the factory. He knew what he was going to find inside. Yet nothing could prepare him for the smell of burnt flesh and cooked human meat.

Inside the former clothing manufacturing factory, the bull statue stood there on its own, nothing surrounding it in the vacant room. The statue itself was dark, tarnished by the flames, ash piled under the bull’s belly, remnants of the fire that had been created and stoked to cook what was inside of the bull’s belly.

Will stood there, a few feet from it as he looked. The factory was still warm, compared to outside. He closed his eyes as he heard Jack talk to Price, telling him to dust the door for prints.

The pendulum swung, the scene before him starting to slowly rewind. *The belly of the bull slowly started to grow as a fire rose, more wood appeared to make the flames reach higher, licking the bull as screams came from within. The bull’s nose looked as though it took in a huge breath, and at the same time Will did as well. Opening his eyes as he watched it play now, the bull issuing a terrible sound, a low bellow of an infuriated bull.*

He swallowed, turning to Jack. “I need to see the body. But it’s going to have to be opened.”

Price seemed to whiten at that, a nod coming from Jack as he spoke orders. He watched from the sidelines as Price dusted the hatch first, then with the help of Zeller and Katz they opened it.

The latch was on the side. They had to cut the bolt holding the bottom, as it had melted from the heat. It had been deliberate and designed for this very purpose. As soon as the bolt gave, allowing the hatch to open, Larry Rufus’s body fell out, causing Zeller to jump back with a yelp. Price covered his nose and Beverly turned away for a moment, collecting herself before she looked back.

The body was burnt black, and there was no hair. The skin would be tough, but the inside of the body would be tender. Will thought of it almost like an oven cooking a turkey. He could see the image of it now, carving into Larry Rufus’s body with a knife and seeing the freshly cooked meat.

He wondered why the Executioner had chosen this method of death, considering he had previously been using the Spanish donkey. It was a vast shift. This was not a medieval device that fit in with what he normally chose. It had a connection to the Ripper, an ancient Greek torture device that warranted death to those stuck inside.

Setting those thoughts aside, Will moved closer as he pulled on his own glove and looked down at the burnt face.

“We’ll need dental records for a positive ID, but that chip in his front tooth looks similar to the photos that were in our vic’s home.”

He reached out, turning the head as he looked. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary. Opening the mouth, he saw burns inside. “He was alive when he went inside.” Moving down to the hands, he moved them only a little. “It looks like he tried to claw his way out, but he used his palms and the back of his hands, not his fingers?”

Looking to Beverly, she came closer. “It seems like his fingers are bent, broken. Could he have broken his fingers before putting him in to stop him getting out?”

“There was no way to escape,” Zellar spoke. “The bull is made from bronze, not a cheap way to build one. But his method would have killed the victim in less than ten minute, given its heat properties.”

“His fingers are broken because he is breaking the offer of friendship he extended to the Ripper.” Will said, seeing it clearly now.

The scent that wafted through made him stop. It had been a while since he had smelt burnt flesh. It had a distinctive odour, not like the usual stench of death that was found at a crime scene. He could almost taste it on the back of his tongue; it made him not want to swallow. In the case of particularly gruesome scenes, Will recalled being instructed to breath through his mouth, but he kept breathing through his nose instead. It grounded him and made him feel

even closer to the killer in another way. That was something he did not enjoy sharing with his co-workers, who would probably look at him strangely.

Standing, he moved away to think as he let the others look at the body. He could feel the killer beside him, his shadow there at the scene looking on with glee.

If this scene was for the Ripper, he would have to share it the way the Ripper did, or better. Closing his eyes, Will tried to think on what he knew of the brazen bull, what he had seen when he entered. What struck him most was the sound, and recalling the original call, the sound had alerted someone.

A picture says a thousands words, but I'll let you hear my opinion.

"The Executioner recorded this. He wants to share it with the Ripper." Will spoke up suddenly, turning to look at Jack, he walked back towards them. "Well, out show him at his own game."

He started walking past the body. He wanted to find a spot, turning back to look at the body. What would give the best angle. "He taped this… He wanted to watch it later, to speed it up to the good bits."

"It's why it's different. It's the first time he'll have proof, he has a souvenir. Medieval tortures used to be public events, people would come to see people hung or quartered."

"You mean the Executioner is about to post a video of himself killing Larry Rufus?" Price spoke up, nodding in agreement with what Will was saying.

"We're about to view a video, maybe. Is the Ripper? Yes. But we're not going to catch him, he's too smart for that, he's thought ahead. He may have taken note of how the Ripper posted that photo and done the same. His phone may be here, or in his body. But he wants a wider audience, he wants more recognition… The other way to make something go viral is to send that video to the news channel, Jack."

At those words, Jack was already dialing people to try and get in contact with news stations. But Will had a gnawing feeling in his gut that he would see that video played far sooner than he would have liked.

"God, it's making me think twice about watching cooking shows." Beverly stated, looking at Zeller.

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That afternoon, Will went back to teach his class. First stopping at the store to pick up new clothes for himself and taking a shower at Quantico next. It helped him to feel better, to not have the scent of burnt flesh sticking to him, or worse, rubbing it onto Eros.

When he finally dismissed the last class, he gathered up the essays he needed to mark for the weekend and put them in his car before he went to pick up his son. He couldn't wipe the smile from his face when he saw his boy, felt his weight in his arm and his warmth. He

whispered secretly to Eros, listening to the boy babble and giggle. Will knew his son was going to say his first word so very soon, he was now only a day off his six month of life. Unable to call it a birthday, but so glad to have welcomed his son into his life.

A few hours later the boy was fast asleep in his crib as Will marked the essay's his students had given him. He had his red pen out as eyes moved across the essay's in search of errors. Given it was only the start of term, most of the paper's looked as though they had been well constructed and planned, some were still rather messy.

As he finished marking one, he stretched in his chair, eyes moving to the clock, the face of it indicating it was well past midnight. There was an ache in his back, a strain in his neck from being bent over for so long.

His chair scraped against the floor as he stood, moving away from the desk towards the cupboard where he kept his whiskey. It had been months since his last glass, but his exhaustion and fear were weighing on him. Having two fingers before bed could not harm him, it may help him sleep better.

When he finally poured the glass and had the first sip, he hummed at the gentle burn he felt going down his throat. He could still feel its effects when he finished the drink and crawled into bed, a gentle tingle started to spread through his body and his eyes were already feeling heavy. It seemed as though he was finally going to get some much needed sleep.

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The stag walks on ahead, but it's not normal. There are feathers on its face, a mane of them around it's neck. They stretch along its spine and down legs and finish in a small upright tuft on the tail.

Its hooves clip clop gently on the ground, evenly. As Will walks behind it, it is not disturbed by his presence. Instead it leads him, guiding him to something.

But it is not only Will who follows.

There are eyes on him, somewhere from behind. But he is not aware of who or what is watching him, observing him. Studying him. He knows if he turns to look there will be nothing there, but he catches glimpses in his peripheral vision, something dark, a shadowy figure with antlers. It reaches for him sometimes, he can feel the brush of nails against the back of his neck, it cold and sharp as knives. They draw shapes gently on his skin and one word, etched into Will so the world knows it. "Mine." These nails are used to digging into flesh, but they are trying to be so loving and gentle. They have taken life, but have the knowledge to save it, too.

From the darkness the creature behind him whispers, it sounds more like the rolling ocean. Its strangely calming to hear it whisper.

Ahead, the stag stops. Turning to look at him, eyes wide as it's mouth opens. It roars, and keeps roaring. Not pausing to take a breath until Will is forced to act.

He brings his hands up to cover his ears as everything shifts and swirls, suddenly he is standing out in the middle of the road, and there are headlights on him. A car horn blaring, and he looks up to see the car driving towards him.

As he does, the horn stops, lights start to flash to indicate it is a police patrol. But fears bubbles forth and his heart starts to race. Where is he, but more importantly, where is Eros?

Chapter 4

It's frightfully cold outside The fog that descends over Baltimore obscures the view of the front garden of Hannibal's home. Bundled tightly, Will keeps Eros close to his chest as the boy whimpers, exhaustion starting to finally wear him down after the hour ride of constant crying.

He's standing on Hannibal's front door step, the officers rapping on the door loudly to get the doctor's attention as the night's sky starts to lighten with the rising sun.

Finally, the door opens, revealing Hannibal in a robe, a red sweater on underneath along with plaid bottoms and a less than pleased expression on his features at having being woken in the early hours. Will only sees it in Hannibal's eyes for a moment, until they take him in. Will feels butterflies in his stomach, wonders what Hannibal will think to find him there with officers and a crying child.

"Will, is everything alright?" Hannibal asks, eyes moving from the omega to the officers.

Not answering the question nor waiting a moment longer, Will walks into the house before he turns to acknowledge Hannibal. "We're fine-"

"We discovered Mr. Graham sleepwalking, we were concerned. Thought it would be safer that we bring him here to you." An officer cuts in, genuine concern in his voice. "Sorry for the early morning call. We'll let you rest for the morning. Please, take care." The last empathised with a glance to Will.

"Thank you," says Hannibal, watching the officers walk away before he shuts the door and locks it.

Will has already gone to the living room having been there once before. Sitting on the couch and putting Eros down to change him, ignoring Hannibal, who comes over and kneels next to them silently, waiting for Will to speak.

There is a rash, making Will cringe a little with sympathy. A reminder of the amount of time Will had been gone from his home and left the boy alone, crying out for him. He came back to discover Winston with him, trying to help, but there only so much comfort a dog could provide.

As he finishes, he lifts Eros against his chest, walking on sore feet as a punishment for himself and to soothe the boy who sniffles and cries weakly, small hands grabbing the front of Will's shirt to hold him close, as though Will could slip away.

It's the most heartbreaking thing Will feels in that moment, silently holding him against his heart as tears roll down his cheeks silently. The night replays in his mind, waking on the road, the only fortunate thing was that a car was there

“You should take a shower,” Hannibal says, a hand coming to rest on Will’s forehead. “You’re freezing. I can prepare something for you both. Come.”

A weak nod comes from Will, he is about to tell Hannibal he brought everything, but he watches the man take what he needs from the bag he had brought, following him slowly down to the kitchen.

Without food lining the benches, the kitchen seems bare and barren until Hannibal starts to move around. First preparing the bottle, placing it in a saucepan of water on the stove to gently warm as he then pulls two mugs from the cabinet.

Chancing a look down, Will sees Eros’s eyes closed, a thumb in his mouth, fast asleep. He breathes a sigh of relief as he looks at Hannibal, watching him brew what appears to be tea in a clear glass kettle. The ingredients within slowly start to expand within the water, unfurling as it takes a shape Will knows well, mushrooms and a flower of some type.

“A herbal tea, something that will help you unwind and relax.” Hannibal tells Will having seen his eyes register the contents.

“Mushrooms?” Will huskily says, unconvinced.

“For a medicinal purpose, it’s completely natural. You need to sleep.”

A sigh escapes Will, he can’t fight the logic on this and while he is staying in Hannibal’s home he knows the man will be able to look after Eros while he rests. Undoubtedly Hannibal has chosen the blend to help him actually sleep.

“You also need to shower,” Hannibal repeats, eyes falling to Will’s muddied legs.

It’s easy to shift Eros into Hannibal’s open arms, he listens to the directions vaguely as his body shakes slightly. Eventually he finds himself in the master bedroom, he knows it is because of the bed and the covers that are drawn back, used from someone sleeping in there.

When he shuts the door to the bathroom he ignores his reflection and strips down, turning on the taps for the shower. Once it is hot enough, he steps under the spray, tilting his head so water cascades over his face, washing away the fear he had felt from that night.

Deftly, he takes some of the body scrub and works it over his feet and legs, up his arms and torso to wash away all the evidence of the night. He doesn’t stop until he finally feels clean.

As he finishes, he shuts off the tap and dries himself off, dressing in a fresh shirt and boxers that have appeared for him. There is a moment when he stops, gathers his thoughts and tries to keep calm, even though he wants to scream. He can feel one perched under his chin, wanting to let it out, but if he does, he knows he couldn’t stop.

Swallowing it down, he goes back into the bedroom and sees Hannibal laying in the bed, gently stroking Eros who is laying next to him. Hannibal lifts a finger to his lips and Will feels like he is intruding on a private moment, but he wants to be close to their son.

On the bedside table is a mug with the tea Hannibal has brewed, recognising the colour and aroma from earlier. “So I just drink it?” he whispers as he climbs into the bed and under the covers to not disturb the sleeping boy.

“Yes, I would have set you up in the guest bedroom. I thought it would be better if I stayed here while you slept, though.” he answers in a husky tone as he watches Will.

Instantly Will knows this is not up for debate, and with the guilt he feels from what had happened that night, he does not blame Hannibal for wanting to make sure they were both safe. Not simply because it was an alpha’s instinct to protect, but because he cared about them both. It touches him, to see the level of devotion Hannibal already has to Eros.

Reaching out, Will lets a finger trace gently over Eros’s forehead as he gives him a weak smile.

Careful not to disturb the boy, he takes the mug of tea and drinks, face scrunching as the warm liquid hits his tongue and the taste registers, a bitter note to them that reminds him of sunflower seed shells. He drains the contents quickly as he can, setting the empty mug aside.

Stifling a yawn, he lies back down on his side, watching Eros and Hannibal until his eyelids begin to feel heavy. There is no noise from outside, the only sound Will can hear is the fast little breaths and the deep steady ones from Hannibal he tries to match. He knows there will be words later, but for now, he lets sleep take him.

His last thought is, *finally* .

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The sun spills into the room, allowing Will to take it in. His feet ache, but he feels more rested than he has the past few nights. He rolls over in the bed to find it empty. It’s all the encouragement he needs to pull on a robe and head down stairs.

Silently he walks down the stairs, hearing a giggle coming from the kitchen he knows too well, though he pauses when he hears Hannibal talking, suppressing a laugh as he hears the doctor using a singsong voice before speaking to Eros.

When Will walks in, the sight that greets him does not disappoint, Eros is balanced on Hannibal’s hip, the aforementioned rice pudding smeared over his cheeks and small hand, attempting to make Hannibal join him.

The bench has two plates with quiche that is beautifully decorated, but what is far more appealing is the wide smile that is on Hannibal’s face, mimicked by Eros.

“Good morning, we were going to bring you breakfast in bed but it seems we have been caught.” Hannibal greets, coming closer to let Will take Eros.

It’s surreal to stand there, Hannibal in front of him still in the same clothes as the night before. “Do you have any coffee?” Will asks instead, pressing a chaste kissing to the boy’s forehead as he babbles fondly.

Sitting down at the bench, Will watches Hannibal make his coffee. He lightly picks at the breakfast, his appetite waning for the conversation he knows that is about to happen. When the coffee is placed next to him, Hannibal stands before him.

“How long have you been sleepwalking?”

Despite knowing, the question still draws a frown from Will. “It’s the first time I’ve left the house.”

“You avoided my question,” Hannibal says, sighing heavily as his eyes close for a moment. “Have there been any other issues I should be aware of?”

“No, it’s probably just normal stress,” Will shakes his head, feeling defensive. As he watches Hannibal’s eyes narrow at him, he adds. “It has nothing to do with working in the field again.”

“Some could consider it a desperate survival mechanism for a psyche that suffers repeated abuse.”

“I am *not* abused,” retorts Will, anger rising.

“You have an empathy disorder, what you feel is overwhelming you. Yet you choose to ignore it. That is the abuse I am referring to.” Hannibal spoke over Will’s quiet ascents.

“I do this because I save lives, Hannibal!”

“And what about your life, Will?” Hannibal cuts in. “What about Eros? I care about you. The both of you. At least let me help you.”

“All I did was follow something in my dream, it’s never happened before.” Will replies defensively.

“Is this a recurring dream?”

“No,” answers Will, his free hand coming up to rub at his temple. “I’m seeing Dr. Du Maurier later today. I’ll talk to her about it.” He sighs. “I’ll need to go to my place to get everything.”

“I’ve already made a phone call to have a room fitted out, along with calling Jack to cancel you going to work today.”

“You’re not my alpha,” Will challenges, feeling annoyed at how easy Hannibal is starting to take over his life. “You don’t get to go making decisions on what you think is best for me!”

“And what about Eros?” replies Hannibal. “I want only what is best for *our* son, I’m not trying to control your life, Will.”

Glaring at Hannibal, Will considers him for a moment before giving him a nod. Closing his eyes as he shakes his head, it is the most logical thing, and it is safer.

When Will's phone rings, he leaves Eros with Hannibal as he answers it. Hearing Jack's voice makes him sigh, but when he hears 'the Ripper' he knows he has to go and see what the killer has created.

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The BoatHouse Canton is a small restaurant overlooking the Patapsco River, but the sight awaiting them on the deck draws far more attention than the beautiful bay with the boats coming in.

Will has the police tape held up for him, coming onto the scene to meet Jack. Instantly his eyes fall to the table where there are two victims being photographed and evidence being catalogued.

This was the first time Will has known the Ripper to display two victims at once. Zeller, Price and Katz are working, photos being taken as prints were being dusted for.

"I see you have noticed," Jack says, walking over to the table. "The Ripper kills in threes. Each body displayed individually. Why has he changed?"

"Maybe there is a fourth body to come, he kills in sounders… The Ripper is not defined by a simple number, Jack. Though three would have purpose with him."

"Why, what is significant about the number?" There is a curious expression on Jack's face, mingled with a frown of disapproval.

"He has a God complex, he doesn't think of himself as God, but he sure enjoys mocking him." Will replies, pausing to stop as he goes over the victims in his head. "It could be as simple as following the Trinitarian formula."

"The what?" Jack frowns.

"The name of the father, the son and the holy spirit." Beverly Katz smiles, popping up from behind the table. "I enjoy horror movies, see it all the time in things about exorcism." She answered to the look she got from Jack.

It makes Will smile, of course Beverly would be into watching horror movies. "Yeah, same kind of principles in a way. When the evil spirit knocks, it does it in threes to mock and taunt. Our Ripper follows the same, but from a different perspective."

"So is he mocking God, or people who believe in God?" Zeller asks as he lowers the camera.

"If he wanted to mock God, why not stick to putting bodies in churches? He's already done it before, why not continue?" Price chips in.

"He'd find that to be tasteless, banal, austere." answers Will, moving a bit closer. "Besides, each scene he sends a message."

"Well, this could be some strange form of incest I've never seen before." Beverly says. "The two vics were related. Father and son. Jeffrey Phillps and Wayne Phillips… They were well

known within the real estate business, and certainly had a reputation regarding their fundraising events for charity."

When Will raises his eyebrows, she continues. "The money that they raised, it was never the amount they actually ended up giving to the charity. Only a tenth of it went to the organization, if they were lucky."

"This sounds more vigilante than the Ripper," Price says. "Though organs are missing."

"What did he take?" Will asks, stepping closer as he catches the scent of blood and death in the air, mixed with the scent of the sea mist.

"Lungs from the father and the heart from the son."

Will stays silent as he looks, watching Jack gesture the team to fall back and provide privacy for Will to let his mind work the scene.

Slowly, he approaches the table.

The father and son sit across from each other. Their clouded eyes stare into the abyss of the other, hands on the table with fingers entwined as though in prayer. A small loaf of bread broken is set on the plates where the victims sit, and the empty seat. The third place setting vacant, beckoning Will to sit.

The table has been set elegantly and properly, not only are there knives and forks, but there are salad forks and spoons awaiting him. Each place has a wine glass filled with a red liquid, the surface of it uneven but the smell it gives is blood. No doubt from the victims in front of him.

Fingers itch to touch, to sit, as he closes his eyes he visualises himself taking the place that has been offered, the bodies of either side of him blinking before they turn to look at him.

My place is set, they are waiting for me. I break the bread because it is tradition, a rite of passage. The bread represents the body of Christ, and the wine represents the blood of Christ. But it is not Christ of whom I am setting this meal for or who I am thinking.

For the feast is life.

This is about family, values and traditions that many seem to have forgotten.

Will frowns as he tries to see the Ripper, he can feel him, but as always it is different to how he normally sees things.

A place has been set for you, because I have been expecting you. This is a celebration of life and death. We both know of loss, but we also know of the beauty of giving life.

Opening his eyes, he looks up to the sky. Thinking of heaven and God, but a sense of longing. This spot was chosen not only for the view of the ocean, but for the view of the sky it provides. There are no buildings in the way, and it is peaceful.

The scene does not add up; things are missing, clues he has not yet found. Ones he suspect lay inside the bloated stomachs of the father and son. He has a sneaking suspicion there will be bread and maybe something more. There are breadcrumbs on the lips of the victims as he looks at them now, and something else they shared. He can sense it.

This is the last they would see of the Ripper for a while. The setting of the table feels too barren for the Ripper's taste. Not hint of a course to follow this one. No dessert.

Walking back to where the team was, Jack gives a nod to Price, Katz and Zeller, Will watching them walk past to start taking apart the scene. "There won't be any other bodies. He's finished his sounder and sent his message."

"What message is he sending us?" Jack briskly replies.

"I'm not entirely sure, I'll need to see the autopsy." Will answers, moving past the man.

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Beverly got to work on the autopsy straight away when the victims came to the lab, Will watches from the sidelines. It was as though he could not look away. He was anxious to have his hypothesis proved correct.

The stomachs of the victim are each removed, Beverly taking them over to a bench as Will came into the room.

"Just in time for the main event," chimes Beverly, turning to give Will a smile. "Would you like to do the honours?" she asks, holding out a scalpel.

"After all you hard work, you deserve to be the one who carves."

"Fine," she playfully replies with a roll of her eyes. "I get all the fun jobs today."

Coming closer, Will watches the scalpel come down to touch the stomach, slicing through the dead tissue before it opens and the smell hits him. There, on top of the churned contents are whole pieces of bread, unchewed and not digested at all.

"The Ripper put the bread in post mortem," Beverly sounds surprised, but she carefully removes the pieces of bread and looks at them. "There is something in the mixture though, like it's been cooked in."

"Cooked?" Will repeats, raising his eyebrows.

"Yeah, ugh, this almost reminds me of that other guy… Will where are you going?"

Before Beverly had even finished he is leaving the room, pieces fitting together and he has been able to sit down and work them out himself. He strides into Jack's office, the alpha looking up, surprised. "The Ripper, he's eating them, and the Executioner *knows it* . That's why his last victim changed, that's why he used the bull. He was sending *us* a message."

“If he wanted to send us a message, there are easier ways to do it.” Jack replies, intently listening to Will now, though his face had paled slightly from the mention of cannibalism. “We can use this as leverage.”

“To bait the Executioner?” Will laughs. “He’s a little too smart for that, but his anger makes him reckless.” He paces across the room.

“Then we use it against him, encourage him to come out.”

“In case you haven’t noticed, we’re not even sure how he is picking his victims. It needs to be something better.”

“Then we get the press to publish a story, say that the Ripper is helping to point them in the direction.” Leaning back in his chair, Jack steeples his fingers.

Stopping, he turned slowly to look at Jack, hoping it wasn’t true. “There are better newspapers that would be happy to run the story.”

“But none have the same gossip as what Tattle crime does.” spoke Jack, letting arms rest on the desk now as he leant forward. “Freddie Lounds has a habit for getting information out of people and would be more reliable.”

Hearing ‘reliable’ and ‘Freddie Lounds’ mentioned in the same sentence makes him laugh, hand coming up to comb through his hair. “Pitting one against the other… He’s smart, Jack. I’m not buying it, I’m pretty sure he won’t either.”

“We catch the Executioner, it may help us to catch the Ripper, if he knows who he is.”

“If you push him, he may just try to kill the Ripper instead.” Will says flatly.

“One less killer on the streets is something I can live with.”

“This is a man who has been killing for years, Jack. He’s been dormant before, pushing him like this may make him fall back.”

“It’s the best choice we have, and it fits my agenda best. I expect you to sit in the interview and assist.” Jack raises his voice slightly, making Will’s ears ring.

“Getting into bed with Freddie Lounds will have repercussions. Ones that will affect your agenda.” Will leaves the room, trying to not storm his way out.

The message of being cooked alive is meant for the FBI and the Ripper. The most concerning part and a reason he knows this plan of Jack’s would not work is that there had only been one body with no further missing persons reports that fit their profile.

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“You look paler than the last time I saw you. I take it you are not sleeping well?” says Bedelia, having just sat across from Will to start their session.

“Difficult to achieve when I’m chasing shadows.” Will says as he smiles wearily. “They found me six miles from my home this morning, walking along the road.”

The second hand on the clock audibly ticks for a few beats, echoing in the vast room as Bedelia collects her thoughts. “In what direction?”

It’s a question that throws Will, having expected an answer like Hannibal’s own. But he thinks. “Towards Quantico.” He answers, though the first city he had thought was Baltimore, deciding it would be better to change it.

A smile appears on Bedelia’s lips, similar to the one Will has seen from Hannibal, the one that doesn’t reach his eyes, the false smile used by therapists. “Has it occurred to you that you may have been chasing something else?”

Taking a deep breath, he clears his throat. “Yes, but I doubt it. The scene I saw that day...” Closing his eyes for a moment, he sees flames rising to lick cold metal as screams echoed distantly in his skull. “It could just be stress.”

“You dismissed it without further thought, but are quick to blame something that you have done before and not had problems with… What did you feel when you woke?”

“Cold.” Will supplies.

There is a tilt of Bedelia’s head, a knowing gaze. “Your tone has been even, thinking back on that experience now, you have not changed.”

Will bristles at being read, hates having Bedelia see him clearer than he could see himself. Thinking back on that morning now, he hadn’t felt fear when he woke, only when he came to realise where he was. “I felt a sense of belonging.” he says, closing his eyes as he felt the back of his neck tingle, the ghost of something scratching into his skin. “Claimed.”

“What was claiming you?” she pushes, tone becoming softer as she became genuinely curious. “More importantly, whom?”

Will looks outside, to the patch of sky he could see now. After having found the scene in the morning, he is aware enough. The Ripper is sending him a message, and as he thinks on it he sees the bodies of the Ripper’s victims, the hollowing of the first, and the gift he had left in the second.

The Ripper knows Will and understands him. The darkness inside of him that no one else has seen, one that he refuses to look at himself. But here is the Ripper, presenting it to him again as a gift. He can almost hear the distorted husky voice, so foreign to him, but so warming and calm.

Without this, you are merely a vessel, ready to be claimed by any. But with what you consider your sin, you are whole, full... I want you by my side.

“Someone who I believe is incapable of love.” He says finally, refusing to accept the gift of darkness.

The following seconds pass silently, Bedelia staring at him as she wonders, curious about the reason why Will is lying to himself, fighting his own thoughts. She looks away, recognizing it is too soon to push him to get to the truth. “You spoke of stress as a possible trigger, could there be a simpler cause? What has changed recently in your life.”

Will raises his eyebrows for a brief moment. “The reason I am here in the first place.”

“Being so close to an alpha you already have a profound connection with is bound to have a physiological response, one that could have imprinted upon you.”

There was a moment he wants to correct Bedelia, to state that the profound connection she was referring to had a name. Eros. He knows where this is going, remembers reading the articles about omegas having a more profound connection to their alpha from experiencing an orgasm with them. How it imprinted upon their brain and could cause chemical reactions and thus stimulate the body by just being close. Nature’s way of making sure that an omega would find an alpha to protect them, and the alpha would have a mate to start a family with and provide for.

“Hannibal is not affecting me.”

“Yet instead of having conversations, you asked to be my patient.” She smiles, slightly amused. “I want to give you a prescription for Osensorate,”

“The hormone balancer?” Designed for omegas coming into or out of their first heat, experiencing mood swings and behaviour that are uncharacteristic of them. “What if I refuse?”

“Humour me.” Bedelia stands from her chair, going to a small cupboard where she pulls out the prescription pad, signing it before giving it to Will. “If you do not improve within a few weeks, we will try a different course of treatment.”

Taking the prescription, he stands as he folds it, pushing it down into his pocket as he leaves the woman’s house. When he sits in his car, his mind is still ticking over with all that had just happened, still processing everything. Bedelia is *good* , and he isn’t sure if it should comfort or frighten him.

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

Many thanks to my lovely Beta readers, there are many and I will likely forget you all. But your kind efforts have truly been appreciated

All updates are queued and then work shall be orphaned.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The night of Will Graham's sleepwalking incident that brought him to Hannibal's doorstep - flashback written in italic

Clouds conceal the moon, allowing no light to illuminate the ground. Only darkness prevails, small outlines of figures and shadows move as the wind carries clouds. For Hannibal it's perfect conditions for him to approach Will's home for an unconventional visit.

As he parks the car in the woods near the special agent's home, he pulls on leather gloves and turns his collar up against the cold and starts to walk. When he reaches Will's home, he is not disappointed.

The lights are out, but Will is on the porch staring vacantly out to nothing. He approaches Will cautiously, smiling to himself when he see's blue eyes unmoving and unaware of their surrounds. Coming closer, Will finally notices his presence, more through scent as he slowly turns.

"Hello, Will," Hannibal speaks gently, letting his gloved hand touch Will's cheek.

The gesture makes Will produce a sound, a keen of sorts. His head tilting down as the omega inhales the pulse point on Hannibal's wrist while still maintaining contact.

As Hannibal takes a step back, he watches Will follow his scent, the omega aware of where his true mate is. He knows that Will is not awake or aware of this late night visit. Still, he was curious about the effect his scent would have upon the omega after he had spent the morning in his home. Hannibal scented the remnants of sweat and fear that was soaked into Will's mattress. Naturally, he let his instinct take over, touching certain things to leave his scent behind, though they were more prominent wherever Eros had been, a reminder for the omega of who the alpha father was.

From the times he has seen Will and some of their phone conversations, Hannibal knows that Will is not coping, that stress and illness are starting affect him. This sleepwalking episode is just another sign. Stepping closer now, he wants to smell the scent Will is giving off, not the lingering scent that is normally left behind, but the one hidden by cheap aftershave, sweat and baby lotion.

Some of Will's curls are stuck to his forehead, beads of sweat are present along his hairline and there are a few light wet patches on his shirt. There is a fever running through Will, nothing serious yet, but his natural scent of earth held a scorched note to it. There was a light floral note, a type of magnolia he was trying to place. Closing his eyes he concentrated upon it as he leant in, finding the name. Autumn Sage, the native magnolia of New Orleans. There was a sweetness to Will's scent that did not come from this though, and it led him to the disease he knew to be wreaking havoc on Will's system.

Encephalitis.

Hannibal smiled knowingly, standing up straight again as he let Will touch and scent him now. There was a choice to be made, he could either step in and let Will know that he was sick, allowing him to be treated. Or, he could allow the encephalitis to continue and watch the results. It may push Will to seek him, his cognitive functions declining, allowing Hannibal to insert himself into Will's life more permanently.

He knew Will was the only person who was smart enough to catch him, clever enough to find the clues and piece the puzzle together. While Hannibal enjoyed the game he had just started, he did not wish to have his freedom taken from him. Not when he had so much to gain by having Will in his life, and Eros.

As Hannibal turned and started to walk back to the car, he only paused when he heard Will follow. He walked back to the omega, directing him to the house and opening the door for him as Will rubbed against him wanton.

"Soon," Hannibal whispered in Will's ear as lips brushed against his lobe, too pleased with the events as plans took shape. "Very soon, you will be ***mine*** *." A promise, one that he would keep. Will was his, and he would mark him as his own and make sure no one got in his way. It seemed Will's biology was aware that they were true mates, despite his consciousness refusing to acknowledge it.*

For years he had thought that there would not be a partner suitable for him. Someone who shared his darkness and understood it. Will was capable of understanding, but was not active in his own thoughts. How beautiful it would be to see Will cultivate those images he had, to see them as the inspirations they were. If only he would act upon them.

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This is not the first time Mrs. Park has cried, nor will it be the last as she recounts the abuse she has sustained by her former husband. A man Hannibal is starting to grow interested in given the indications she has pointed to. It's only early afternoon and this is his second last patient before he will go and pick Eros up from the FBI, he knows Will shall be working late on the case he left for this morning. Afterall, Hannibal designed the scene especially for him, at least his message will be appreciated and understood The moment of thought is interrupted when his patient speaks. He watches as Mrs. Park dabs under her eyes with a tissue as she sits directly across from him in his office.

"I shouldn't be like this, I'm supposed- to lead." Mrs. Park says more to herself, tone harsh as she takes in deep breaths and wills herself to calm. A tissue is clutched in her hand tightly,

knuckles white from the fist she is making.

“Your therapy is not about leadership, it is about overcoming past events and traumas that have influenced your life and scarred you, deeply.” Hannibal assures her, trying to convey the point of why she is attending these sessions. “What is discussed here has no impact on you outside these walls, it is a safe place where no judgement shall be passed against you and you may use it as clarity. An opportunity to understand your emotions and overcome obstacles that try to block your path forward.”

The woman let out a broken half laugh and sob, a smile appearing on her face as she dried her eyes. “Thank you, Dr. Lecter.”

Giving a slight incline of his head, he sat up a little straighter, uncrossing his legs to mirror Mrs. Parks own body language to show empathy. “Would you like to continue?”

Giving a shaky nod, Mrs. Park takes another tissue from her purse as she gathered herself up. “They always say you should spice things up in the bedroom, try different things and play out each other’s fantasies. It’s supposed to help you both have a better connection I suppose.”

“But Daniel,” she paused to take a breath, a quick look to Hannibal for reassurance and it was met with a soft gaze. “We never had safe words… Or, I never had safe words. At first he wanted to restrain me, and it was fun, but I know now it was planned, he wanted my trust, so when he would take off his belt-”

Hannibal could picture the very scene happening to his patient, eyes falling to her neck where there were some still healing bruises just visible. The rope burn that was on her left wrist. Such claiming marks upon her skin, in time they would heal though. He wondered if she was thankful she could not form an attachment to her divorced husband, wondered what would have happened if it had been another of the same sex doing such things to her, or an omega. If her behaviour would change, would she have challenged them? Considering she let the beta dominate her, knowing that her body was her own and not at the mercy of her biology.

“I let him, I always let him do it. Because he would leave me afterwards, but the one day he didn’t, I knew I had to leave.”

Perhaps she was not a killer. “And it was fortunate you did.” He spoke, giving her a gentle nod, repeating about the steps they were putting in place to help Mrs. Park deal and manage with her symptoms as her hour came to a close.

They exchanged a quick goodbye, giving him time before his next appointment to make notes on Mrs. Park. He knew the woman was still dealing with the traumatic events of her past, what her former husband had done to her psychically and mentally. There was still so much to go over and they had barely scratched the surface in the two months that she had started her therapy. Mrs Park was yet to bring up the ‘accidental’ death of her four year old daughter, one that the police had suspected her former husband of, and when he had read the report and the animal mutilation and violence, he had believed he was solely responsible for the girl’s death. Hearing footsteps in the waiting room, Hannibal made two quick phone call before greeting his next patient.

He made a record of the time that the renovator would be coming, already having plans for what he was going to do to the room that was going to be his son's. It was a better use of his time as he put on a smile and greeted his most difficult patient. "Franklyn. Please, come in."

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The dogs are not keen on their new living situation, and the look on Will's face when he comes in the front door and sees the socks that Winston and Zoe wear on their feet, he actually smiles and laughs. Dropping down to pet them as they walk over to him, legs moving oddly from the socks.

"They're not pleased, but I won't have them scratching the floor, it also produces less sound." Hannibal greets Will, stepping into the foyer.

"You didn't have to bring them." says Will while he stands, walking over to Hannibal. "Is Eros asleep?" There is a note of disappointment at not being there for his son's bedtime, but the day drew out longer than he had planned. Having Hannibal there though, looking after him, Will had to admit that this idea was growing on him.

"We were waiting for you, though he ended up falling asleep just after eight." Hannibal says not mentioning that it is close to eleven, taking in the dark circles that are still present under Will's eyes, there had been no phone call and it had struck him as odd through the day to not here from the man when he was normally quite concerned. "Dinner is in the oven, it should still be hot enough to eat."

The alpha strides out, leaving Will to follow. Will quickly glances to the dogs who seem unconcerned, both moving over to the two beds that have appeared in the foyer so far and he wonders just how far inside the house Hannibal will allow them. Though it seems he is eager to protect his belongings. Lazily, he follows Hannibal then, coming into the kitchen and watching him pull on oven mitts as he opens the oven door and pulls out the plates.

"The plates will be hot, but the meal should be fine. A simple eye fillet served with steamed green peas, pepper sauce with a hint of lemon, thyme and white wine."

"Did you have your hands full?" asks Will, frowning slightly and hoping that their son had not been too upset.

There was a small tilt of Hannibal's head, a slight twitch of lips. "He was not fond of your absence, it was easier to prepare the dish this way, and less time consuming." It was one of the politer ways that Hannibal could say it, given Eros had been upset over his Will's absence. Hannibal had expected the events from the night before to impact on the sleeping behavior of the boy, undoubtedly he would want Will there, a familiar face to put him to sleep and comfort him. One Hannibal could not be due as he had not been a strong figure in the boy's life so far. At least when Eros would awake in the morning or through the night, Will would be there to comfort him.

"His room has the necessities," Hannibal continued, Will listening attentively. "But the renovator will not be in until tomorrow afternoon, they are coming around five. I thought you may want to contribute."

“This is only a temporary arrangement, I don’t think a renovator is required.” Will felt as though he was repeating himself, their situation as they currently stood. But he wanted to make it clear, he didn’t need a carer for him or his child. Not full time. They would catch this killer, killers eventually. Soon with how the Executioner’s last murder felt, it was bordering on breakdown, Will had felt it, a feeling that had been lingering in his system, one that may not entirely be purely for the killer he sensed, but his own mind.

“With both our schedules, I doubt either of us would have time to prepare the room, to paint and decorate.” answered Hannibal calmly. “Eros deserves his own space, and I’m sure you will spend time in there with him when you are not working.”

“It sounds like you are making things more permanent by hiring someone to do this.” Will pointed out, shoulders moving back as he started to become defensive.

“More trying to create a suitable place for him to stay within the house, it is not exactly child friendly yet. It would be far easier to hire someone to create a room for Eros where he can not injure himself, a space where he may be left.”

“Or destroy not anything of value.” finished Will, giving a nod of understanding. “You seem to have a collection of things certainly not suitable for children.” His eyes looked around the pristine kitchen, the beautiful set of stainless steel knives and bench tops, he thought of some other areas of the house he had seen, the antlers that were placed on coffee tables and display shelves and the power sockets that had not safe guards. The house felt more like a museum, Hannibal being the devoted collector there to admire his pieces and keep them in pristine condition.

“While some artefacts are rare and difficult to come by, there are replica’s. Eros is irreplaceable.”

The comment made Will look at Hannibal for a moment, disbelieving as to what he had heard, but slowly, a smile crept over his lip. “I’ll make sure I’m here, if you insist.” His heart fluttered slightly in his chest, Bedelia’s words resonating in the back of his mind. *“You never allowed him an opportunity.”* It now made him reconsider, a small regret knotting his stomach as he watched the alpha dominate the kitchen space.

“The meat pairs beautifully with a dry shiraz. It looks like you could use a drink and we still need to discuss our new arrangement.”

Will watched Hannibal move, taking out two glasses before he then got the bottle he had spoken of, pouring a glass for him first. While Will was not keen on their conversation, there was less tension between them now than what there had been in the morning.

“While I realise I am not your alpha, Will. I do hope that you will stay with me while you are being treated by Dr. Du Maurier. An extra set of hands to help.”

“Only, when we move back, you will ask for more time.” Will sighed. “At least I know the care he will be receiving.”

“After what has happened recently, it would be of benefit to Eros to have us both there for him if required, he will be able to form a close attachment to another, a connection and have another source of stability in his life.”>>>>>> “With what has happened recently, it would be better for Eros to have both of us in his life. Not only will he be able to have another source of stability in his life, but he can start to form an attachment to another parent figure.”

Will could feel his throat become dry as he had listened, wondered what Hannibal was thinking about their son, and how he had been raising the boy. He knew of Hannibal’s distress in a way, Will had feared he had passed along his empathy and other neuroses to Eros at times, fearful of what his son would grow up to be like, if he would be just like him. “This sounds more like an introduction to a research study than parenting.”

There was the smallest shrug of Hannibal’s shoulder. “A few of the parenting articles I have read state it is better for a child to grow up and to have their biological parents in their lives actively.”

“It’s not that I doubt your skills.” answered Will.

“But you are concerned with my intentions.” Hannibal spoke, turning to look at Will now as he handed him his wine glass. “Given the lifestyle you grew up in, the way you have avoided myself at times, it was a conclusion I had drawn.”

“I love my son, Hannibal. Our son. I don’t want to lose him.”

“Having assistance to look after Eros does not demean your parenting skills, it is simply an opportunity for you to have some time to yourself. Something that could be of value to you at this moment. But time for ourselves is important, we need an opportunity to unwind from the stress of our everyday life, which is why I have already been looking at sitters.” Hannibal paused, letting Will think on the suggestion as they walked into the dining room and sat down opposite each other.

“Why do I get the feeling you already have ideas for this free time that I would have while Eros is being cared for?” Picking up the knife and fork, he stared at the plate instead of looking at Hannibal, wanting to hear what he had to say.

“I thought perhaps you could accompany me to the opera or a gallery… Not that I don’t enjoy spending time with Eros, it is just the conversations tend to be rather one sided.” Hannibal smirked, seeing Will’s lips lift into a smile.

“I’ll take you up on this offer on one condition.” smiled Will, watching Hannibal shift and a passion flare in his eyes. “It’s only once a week and you won’t accompany me while I go fishing. Though I do promise to bring any of my catches back here.”

Where normally most people would not have seen the disappointment in Hannibal’s face, Will noticed the miniscule downturn on his lips, the way his eyes narrowed and there was a flash of something before it was hidden again.

Hannibal gave a rather dramatic sigh at his choice, bringing his glass of wine to his nose to scent the flavors before taking a sip and letting them sit upon his tongue. “Very well, I

suppose it is better than none at all." He answered, disappointed but now happy to let the events he was planning unfold, watching what would happen and how it could change Will.

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Hannibal had offered a guest room, but he had politely declined, choosing to sleep with Eros. Will felt guilt over what had happened and he spent most of the night watching his son sleep peacefully. There was no comment made on the décor, the fancy furniture that cost more than anything Will owned that was there for his son, their son. Specifically chosen for him, it was touching in its own way. But when he had first walked in and gone to Eros, he saw the toys that had been brought from his home, they had not been forgotten or disregarded. There was consideration given and respect for Eros's and Will's choices despite his age.

As for his own sleep, it did not come easily. But Will knew he must have finally succumbed to it in the early hours, as he woke to feel the warmth of sunshine over his face, small flicks of dust floating in the light as he took a deep breath. He was half wondering what had woken him when he heard it, a noise, a word.

"Dada."

Getting out of bed quicker than ever, Will came over to pick Eros up as maroon eyes gaze intently at him with an innocent smile that is reciprocated instantly by Will.

"What did you say?" shock and disbelief in his tone, unbelieving. Is this a trick? Is his mind not fully awake.

When the word is repeated several times, he can't help but to grin with pride and praise for the boy, doting smile worn as he kisses Eros's forehead. It's the best start to the morning Will could have asked for, feeling a weight lift inside of him as he picks the boy up and heads downstairs, he wants to share this moment, to catch it on camera. He knows he will have to as Bev is going to enjoy this.

Heading for the kitchen first, he is surprised to find it empty. He walks through the house until he see's a light on in the study, stepping into the room as he sees Hannibal sitting at a desk writing. The walls are lined with bookshelves, a similar design to the man's office. Instead of paying attention, he comes closer as he holds Eros, and Hannibal looks up with a tight smile.

"Good morning," greets Hannibal, eyes narrowing slightly as he becomes curious why Will has sought him out when he had retreated to the privacy of his study. He hoped that Will would not read his notes, become curious what he was writing, though it was in his native tongue and coded, he did not appreciate people prying.

Will gives Eros a tickle, making him laugh. "Tell Papa what you did this morning." He smiles at the boy before looking at Hannibal who is now completely focused on them as he waits, and as Eros speaks Will watches the joy flicker over Hannibal's features.

"Did this happen overnight or this morning?" asks Hannibal as he stands and moves to hold their son. "Can you say Papa?" smiling as he plays a gentle tug of war as the small hand

holds his finger.

“This morning, he called out for me, I woke up to hear him. He thought it was quite funny, but it certainly made me get out of bed quickly.”

Hannibal chuckles gently, still playing with the boy as he says ‘dada’ a few more times before reaching out for Will. “It seems he has a favorite,”

“Only last night you were saying you found the conversations one sided.” Will smirks.

“Well, we can start to work on his language now. We’ll have you speaking Lithuanian and English by three. Nebus jums mažylis?”

Hannibal’s hand gently caresses Eros’s cheek as he gives a giggle. The situation highly amusing to the boy, but he enjoys having their complete attention.

“Working on patient notes?” Will asks as he looks to the book Hannibal had been writing in. The open page written in a language he doesn’t entirely understand, though he frowns when he see’s his own name next a word he doesn’t know.

“More of a journal to record my own notes in, something that I have continued to do on a daily basis since medical school.”

“Oh,” His eyes drift from the journal, and focus on some of the books.

“Did you at least rest well?” Hannibal asks, a tilt of his head as he closes the journal. Gently he pries Eros from Will’s hold, smiling at the boy as he rests him on his hip and waits for Will’s answer.

“Yeah,” The response is vague, there had been nightmares of the scene but it had not been as bad as what was normal. They had been oddly comforting. Yet he couldn’t remember the content of them, only the feeling. Did that even make them nightmares?

“You seemed exhausted when you returned,” The word chosen carefully, though he wished to say ‘home’ instead. “It seems that Jack is already pushing you.”

“I pushed myself,” Came the defiant reply, Hannibal watched as Will drew his shoulders back and became defensive. “It’s the Ripper. He’s sending us a message, or at least I believe he is. Unless it is intended for the Executioner, Jack wants to think that, but this is personal. Something has changed in the Ripper’s life.”

A tilt of Hannibal’s chin as he wonders what Will’s imagination has supplied, the inner cogs turning over to produce a picture he will never be able to view. “What did you see?”

For a moment Will pictures the scene again, the father and son, the wine glasses and blood, the bread and human remains that were sitting in their stomachs waiting to be found. “The father, the son and the holy spirit… But it’s not. It’s not the body of Christ they were eating, it was each other. But it’s three, it’s always three. It’s why Jack is pissed, because the Ripper isn’t going to strike again. His sounder is over.” A heavy sigh left Will as he shook his head gently, listening to Eros speak again he smiled as he took the boy back into his arms. Keen to

hold onto the boy so filled with innocence and not knowing what the outside world held, how he wished he could keep Eros this way forever. An arm wrapped around the boy an let him rest against his chest, turning his head to let his chin brush over curls as he moved out to the door, needing coffee to get moving.

“Sounder. As in a herd of wild swine?” Slight smirk as he thinks on the term and how fitting it is, Will was always capable of seeing so much more than others within the FBI.

“Wild swine is exactly what the Ripper see’s, free range meat that he can collect at any time.”

“The Ripper is a cannibal?” There was a note of surprise in Hannibal’s voice, a genuine reaction to the news of Will discovering what his trophies actually were.

“The Executioner left us a note. So if we catch the Executioner, we could catch the Ripper.” Will spoke, pausing by the door where he turned to see Hannibal still standing by his desk. “I’ll make sure I’m back at five today, I won’t let Jack keep me.”

It was a surprise for Hannibal to learn that the Executioner was very aware of his dietary habits, something no one else had figured out before. Most had speculated that what he took was trophies, a collection that he had as tokens. Though they did say the best profilers were serial killers, and he had to wonder, with the Executioner so keen to strike up a friendship, was this killer possibly a cannibal as well? Had the victim who had been cooked in the bull actually been missing any organs?

It drew Hannibal from his stupor, Will had shrugged it off as the knowledge of cannibalism had possibly surprised the alpha. “Excellent,” smiled Hannibal, coming to join Will. “Let me make you a coffee before you leave.”

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Arriving early to Quantico, Will wanted to get in and drop Eros off at the FBI daycare before he met Freddie Lounds. He had parked out of the way to avoid her attention, though he had not seen her car when he entered. Hugging Eros close to him, he managed to get inside the building without seeing Lounds, coming to the front of the daycare he spent a few minutes playing with his son before finally kissing him goodbye and letting Louise take him until the other kids arrived.

When he sighed in relief, watching the boy go, he heard the click on the camera and whipped around to see bright red curly hair and a camera lens looking straight at him. Freddie Lounds appeared to have no shame when it came to getting her inside scoop. Where she was gave her a clear view of the daycare and most likely she had photos of him and Eros on the camera she was putting away. He strode over to her forcefully, advancing on her despite her alpha status.

“Delete it.” It was a simple order, not an ask. He would not bargain with her when it came to his son.

“Makes you appear more human, funny enough I haven’t seen the father yet and you’re still not bonded.” Freddie’s eyes fell to Will’s neck, lips lifting to show teeth. She had not backed

away despite Will stepping closing. “Then again, it could just be inherited. First your own omega mother, now possibly the alpha father. Maybe they saw you for what you were.”

Nails dug into the palm of his hand, nearly breaking skin as he tried his best not to hit Freddie. “You remind me of an informant I once met, real unfortunate what happened to him. They discovered his body in one of the old abattoirs, multiple stab wounds. Nothing life threatening, but the killer tied him down, left him there… Until the rats found him.”

A shudder ran through Freddie, quick, but Will gave the tiniest smirk at the effect. “You don’t have anyone that would miss you Freddie, you’re not the only one who looks into people’s backgrounds.” What would he give for the Executioner to torture the reporter with rats, a fitting end to the bottom feeder that Freddie Lounds was. Normally he wouldn’t wish it on people, but when it came to his son, he wanted to protect him.

“Will?” Alana walked out from the cafeteria, coffee in hand, having spotted the pair, the way Will was standing and where they were. “The interview room is on the other side, Ms. Lounds. I thought you were rather well acquainted with it by now.”

Not missing the deliberate jab that had been sent to her, a smile was put on after the brief close of eyes and flash of annoyance flitting over Freddie’s face, in an attempt to be friendly as she turned her attention from Will to Alana. “I parked out the side today, was just walking around getting some pictures inside the halls of the FBI for my readers, considering I am doing an exclusive interview.”

“I’m afraid the only photos you can take here are the ones inside the conference room and the front gate. If you don’t mind, I’d like to delete those photos myself, especially as you are giving an interview with Will. The protection act still holds, you can’t use anything involving Will without his permission.” Arms crossed over in front of her, Alana stood tall, her right foot tapping gently in annoyance. She knew exactly what Freddie had been doing.

Reluctantly, Freddie handed over the camera, watching Alana wipe the memory card clean before handing it back. “If you’d follow me.”

Gracefully, Alana pivoted on the ball of her right foot and strode off, Will following as he muttered a low thanks to her. Normally he would have been annoyed at someone stepping in for him, annoyed by another’s intervention, but he would not do that when it came to his son.

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“The latest victim of the Executioner was found cooked alive, a significant change in his method of killing his victims. Can you tell us why you believe he has changed?”

The recorder sat in the middle of the table, Freddie on one side with Jack, Alana and Will directly opposite. Jack had his elbows on the table, hands clutched together and was attentive. Alana was imitating Freddie’s pose, shoulders back with her head held high. Will however was as drawn back as he could be, back pressed up against the chair, wishing he could sink further into it, glasses sitting half way on his nose, just so he could glare over them at Freddie when he needed too, and she was constantly looking to him, making mental notes and

observations on him. He could see her mind ticking over and writing a separate article to the one she was conducting an interview for.

“The Executioner wanted to show the Ripper what he is capable of, but we have all seen the public rejection that the Ripper posted on Twitter.” Jack spoke carefully, each word weighed before being spoken, carefully to not provide too much or any clues.

“So it was the Ripper who posted the photo on social media,” Freddie smiled, she leant forward a little more. “You are still waiting for the response from the Executioner.”

“We believe that the two killers are working together, or that they are the same. That the Twitter post is a guise that is being used to lure our attention away from the possibility of them collaborating.” Jack gave a nod, showing confidence in his statement.

Painted nails tapped on the surface of the table for a moment before Freddie pushed her questioning more, Jack beat her to it, cutting Freddie off before she had the opportunity to speak. Will stayed silent, concealing his doubt and trying to not convey any signs of mistrust while Jack spoke.

“Whoever this killer is, they are a psychopath, they do not have the same emotions or experiences as what you or I do. This is purely about power and sadism.”

“We’re done,” Will stated abruptly as he stood, straightening out his jacket as Jack glared at him, as he walked out he heard the alpha’s footsteps follow and when he had gone back to his lecture hall, Jack came in and closed the door.

“Would you mind telling me what that was all about?” his voice was cold, louder than normal. The anger within it passed through Will, not affecting him in the slightest.

“I’m not going to sit there while you feed false information to Freddie Lounds encouraging the Ripper or the Executioner to kill again.” His tone matched Jack’s, pushing the glasses up as he stood awkwardly for a moment. “You come to me talking about saving lives, but you just went out and signed death warrants. You’re wanting to find bodies.”

“One of them is bound to react, to become sloppy. It may lead to some actual evidence we can use to catch them.” There was desperation and obsession in Jack’s tone, eyes unmoving as he stared down at Will.

“The Ripper has shown he can wait, that he is patient. Or that he can kill and not be noticed. The same with the Executioner… And what about telling Lounds of the cannibalism, why leave that out?” Will understood what Jack was going for but he didn’t agree, there was information that should have been spoken, that should have been included in the article but Jack was being reckless in his plight to catch these killers.

“What is that bound to get us, Will? More false confessions and leads that don’t add up. We leave that out, use it later. It’s the ace up our sleeve in a way.”

“Oh,” laughed Will, seeing it clearer now. “So when you think you have caught the Ripper, you’re just going to ask for a stool sample and hope it all holds up in court. You know

cannibalism isn't illegal."

"Multiple murder is." Jack finished. "And if we can match DNA we can lock him up and throw away the key." Will stood there, watching Jack leave as the door slammed after him. He knew that Jack was right, even though it was wrong. But hopefully the article may even convince the Executioner to call the hotline with info on the Ripper. To tip them off, most likely to commit his own murders again and have the spotlight.

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It was a few minutes until five when the doorbell rang, Hannibal opened it and found the renovator standing there, a quick glance to the driveway showed no Volvo. Still, he opened the door wider and welcomed the man into his home.

"Lovely house, you do not see many people keeping the traditional fittings now days." The man spoke, looking to the windows and the floor boards.

"It is a theme I would like to keep in the bedroom that is to be decorated as well." Hannibal smiled, walking through the house, up the stairs and to the room he wanted decorated. He opened the door to the room, hearing the low faint rumble of a car in his driveway. Looking to his watch Will was only a few minutes late, most likely held up by traffic.

"Are you making this into a child's room or guest bedroom?" The man asked.

Hannibal was about to answer when the front door opened and Will came through, he excused himself to go down and meet him.

"Sorry, traffic was bad and we had to pull over on the way." Will explained, Eros in his arms sniffling pitifully with red puffy eyes.

"No matter, the renovator is upstairs already. Here," Hannibal spoke, moving to take Eros as Will put his keys and bag down. Taking off his jacket, Will placed it over the satchel on the ground.

"I'll put this away, you should at least decide where you want things and see if it works." Opening the door to the foyer closet, Hannibal picked up Will's jacket, hearing a rattle as he placed on a hook along with the satchel.

Will headed upstairs, Winston and Zoe at his heels following as Hannibal watched while rubbing Eros's back, listening to the soft whimper from his son and the soft cry of "dada". Hannibal waited till Will was out of sight, and then went to look at Will's jacket.

Opening the closet door, he carefully held Eros as he let one hand look through the pocket he heard the rattle from. Pulling out the prescription bottle as he looked at the label, there was a small smile. He saw the name, the prescription and dosage. It seemed Bedelia was somewhat aware of what was happening to Will, interfering in the process.

Distantly, he could hear Will greet the renovator and he moved quickly. He put the pills back in Will's pocket as he climbed the stairs, knowing he would be changing those pills Will was

on. It was simple enough to replace some of the pills with ones of a different dosage, changing the level of hormones being delivered to Will's system, and how it affected his body. The constant flux would make his system go haywire and spur on the encephalitis Will was already experiencing. Reaching the landing, he could see Will in the distance, moving closer as he placated the boy in his arms so he would not distract Will.

The dogs were sitting outside of the room, not entering but keeping a watchful eye. Hannibal could see Will's stance, the way his shoulders were pushed back and the small fidget of fingers.

Where one would normally walk forward and offer their hand, Will kept his own by his sides, wishing he still had Eros in them as an excuse to not shake. He was trying for Hannibal's benefit to at least be polite. "Will, hopefully this doesn't cut into your schedule."

"My calendar is available, just moved to the area. But had experience for years… Folks call me Dan… This your son?" Focus was turned away from Will suddenly, to Eros.

Will followed, feeling an odd prickling sensation at the way the man looked at Eros and Hannibal, but more the look or glare he seemed to be giving him afterwards.

"He has your eyes, but your curls." Dan spoke, looking first to Hannibal before back to Will. "You just move in?" His tone changed, eyes narrowed on Will.

"It is why we are looking for someone to turn the room into something more suitable for our child. Currently, I don't find it adequate." Hannibal interjected, sensing Will's discomfort.

"Hmm," Dan hummed, turning around to look over the room. "You said you wanted it done as soon as possible?"

Maroon eyes followed Dan's motion, knowing he was taking in the home in good detail, more than a normal renovator would. "Yes, it is rather urgent I'm afraid."

Returning his attention to Hannibal, he put on a better face to the alpha as he spoke professionally to him. "I can start tomorrow, will only take me a day or two to organize. But if you have some plans, I can work with what you would like and what you want to keep."

Will walked over to Hannibal, taking Eros from him. "I'm going to go and start dinner."

There was a look from Hannibal, a slight rise of eyebrows at the statement. But he did not stop Will, he let him leave with Eros, turning back to Dan as he politely asked for his business card.

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Standing at the front door, Will watched as Dan pulled out of the driveway. He had left Eros's in the living room in a playpen, not wanting him to be near the renovator when he had left. "I don't like him."

"He was not the most charming personality, but he does wonderful work, or so I've been told." The front door was closed and locked, it had started to rain outside, the dark clouds

blocking the sun and making it feel later than what it was.

“He seemed more interested in you and Eros,” Will pointed out, still feeling an unpleasant tingle down his spine from the look the man had given them.

“Your presence and Eros’s has set tongues wagging, it will only be a day or two at the most. We do not have time and as you have pointed out before, I currently do not have an area that is safe for our son.” Walking through the foyer, Hannibal headed to the kitchen to start on their dinner.

The kitchen lights came on, illuminating the bench top and making the room feel warmer as rain rolled down the glass door. Hannibal went to the fridge and started to take out a few vegetables, taking them to the sink to wash as he listened to Will’s movements. Lost in thought to the beta who had just come into their home, his card already added to his rolodex for later use. Still, he was curious what the beta saw in Will.

“Well, we're not staying here while he is working.” Will spoke defiantly, facing Hannibal.

“You are more than welcome to stay in the master bedroom again, the cot can be moved in quite easily.” He could see the stubbornness in Will showing, but he was unperturbed by it.

“That, that is not what I want and you know it.” sighed Will. “You could just agree with me for once, let me do something.”

Picking up a teatowel, Hannibal dried his hands as he turned and walked closer. Stopping only inches from Will. “You are still adjusting to the move.” he brought a hand up to touch Will’s cheek. “You’re running a fever.” Keeping his hand there despite Will trying to move away, he frowned slightly, letting concern show on his features.

“I spent half a night out in the cold sleep walking, I have probably picked something up.” Will grumbled, ignoring how good Hannibal’s cool hands felt on his heated skin. Blue eyes met maroon for a brief second before he looked away, focusing on the top lip and how it slightly protruded over the bottom. How they were still plump despite Hannibal’s age, the small specs of hair that were coming back before they would disappear early tomorrow morning when Hannibal would shave.

There was a click of the alpha’s tongue, hands moving to feel Will’s neck, checking the lymph nodes. No signs of swelling or discomfort were present, he knew it was something more. “Possibly, and you should consider if leaving now would be the best course of action.” Tilting Will’s chin, he looked him in the eye, a soft moment where they gazed into each other.

Will leant forward. He wanted to kiss him, like he had the first night he met Hannibal, when there was no obligation. Acting on feelings was something he did everyday, but in this instance, with Hannibal, he fought against them, despite wanting to cave into them. His own self doubt and low self-esteem weighing him down and holding him back, but all that was forgotten now with Hannibal touching him. He wanted this, to feel him, again. There was a part of him that missed Hannibal’s touch, the way he would kiss, how good his hands felt on him.

Lips pressed against Hannibal's gently, so soft at first as Will kissed him. As he continued Hannibal opened up, reciprocating the kiss with infinite tenderness as his hands moved down Will's body and came to rest on his hips before Hannibal took a step back and broke the contact.

Instantly, Will missed the connection, not caring for the small whine he could feel building in his throat. Though he didn't let it escape, he licked his lips, tasting Hannibal still upon them as he opened his eyes to look at him.

"I shouldn't have done that." Will's voice was just above a whisper, tongue skimming over his bottom lip again before he moved a step back. He only stopped when Hannibal gently touched his arm, making him pause.

"Did you not wish me to return the gesture?"

Slowly, Will turned to look at Hannibal. Noting his soft eyes, the faint smile and how a few bangs fell out of place. It made him seem warmer, more open and feel like home. He could already picture himself curling up and touching Hannibal, kissing him again. Letting Hannibal's hand caress and touch, lift and pull apart, explore him and make him fold to desires he desired.

"You've wanted to do that for a long time." Will saw it, knew that Hannibal had wanted this. He had been patient, waiting for him to make the first move, and Will just gave him that. His own feelings had been shown, Hannibal would know that he felt something for him now. It was not a drunken kiss, something that could be excused because of the moment.

"Since the first time I met you, and while I enjoyed your company, you were quick to chastise yourself and take off." Hannibal reminded him, but his tone was understanding, he knew the reason as to why Will had done it. But he had been working recently on lowering the omega's defenses, little by little becoming more involved within his life.

"I don't know if this is my attraction" spoke Will, thinking it could have also been jealousy for what had just happened before with the renovator, how the beta had looked at Hannibal. How he spoke in a kinder manner, more professional and friendly than what he had with him. "or yours,". There was a small jerk of his arm, dislodging Hannibal's hold as he walked from the kitchen only pausing by the doorway.

"But it felt good." he admitted, barely turning his head, he could see Hannibal in his peripheral vision, standing there being so damn patient and waiting for him. But he left, going back to the living room.

Chapter End Notes

and I'm sorry if I don't answer your comments right away or at all! I don't mean to and some things slip!

Chapter 6

Will had been sitting in the living room watching Eros attempt to crawl, though it could be called more appropriately the worm dance. There were a few times Will tried to help but he ended up chuckling and laughing at the boy, who in turn thought it was funny to watch Will laugh and joined in giggling. Hannibal had found Will laying belly down on the floor, stuffed toy in his hand as he tried to encourage Eros to crawl.

The sight of Will was one at ease, gone was the thought of his job as he encouraged their son to develop. He hid a smirk as he brought the topic of murder back to the forefront of Will's mind, speaking with a slight tone of disapproval and annoyance. "It seems Miss Lounds has published the article you gave her an interview for, though she hardly stay within the realms that Jack provided."

A heavy sigh was released, Will stood to see the tablet in Hannibal's hands, reading the irritation in his eyes, only just there. "When has Freddie Lounds ever had journalistic integrity?"

"Though we as a species evolved to feel shame, it seems Miss Lounds has no use for it. There is a lack of regard for the harm her words are capable of causing others, more concern placed on hits and views."

There was a desire to roll his eyes, though with Hannibal's tone already holding a more clinical note for it, he decided not to. "Thank you doctor Lecter," Holding his hand out, Will waited for Hannibal to allow him to read the article, though he knew already he was not going to enjoy it.

There was a tilt of Hannibal's head before he then gave him the tablet, walking over to kneel next to Eros, Hannibal started to try and encourage the boy to crawl and play, though he was also watching Will read, watching the range of emotions that were displayed on the man's delicate features.

The Chesapeake Ripper has terrorized the citizens of Baltimore for years, but this is not the only killer who is making a dramatic display of his victims to the public. To many, there is a distinct similarity between the Executioner and the Ripper. Specialists at the FBI believe the killers may in fact be the same, that this killer or killers are experimenting with their style to try and throw off the investigation.

There is a new level of sadism reached with this killer, while the Ripper is known for mutilating his victims while they are alive, his technique is quite quick. The Executioner however draws the time of death out, taking enjoyment as he watches his victims struggle, even cooking them alive in an effort to show the Ripper why he is the better killer.

Will Graham, FBI special agent and criminal profiler is working on the case. The first active investigation he has returned to since becoming a father. While many omegas would stay at home, living with their partner and raising their child, this single parent is out working active field duty trying to put criminals behind bars. Some of his students applaud his efforts-

The tablet was placed face down on the couch, looking up to see Hannibal holding Eros's hands as the boy was balanced on his feet and making it seem as though he was walking. Will watched silently for a moment, focusing on it instead of the article and the fact that people would know he was a father now. As Hannibal turned he saw Will watching, picking Eros up as he walked over.

"Do you believe it is the same killer?" There was a note of curiosity in Hannibal's tone, interested to know the FBI's thoughts and Will's own as he believed they did not match each other from the look of those blue eyes.

Giving a shake of his head, he smiled for Eros and stood, tickling the boy before he kissed him on the forehead. "Jack wants to goad the Ripper, or the Executioner. He believes one of them will snap."

"But you don't."

Two sets of maroon eyes were focused on him, still he couldn't lift his gaze to meet Hannibal's. "No. The Ripper killed to intentionally distance himself from the Executioner, publicly… He has only killed again to send a message."

"And what message would that be?" Hannibal asked, lifting Eros from Will into his arms and holding the boy close to his chest.

Will watched, remembering the scene, father and son. Eros seemed to be falling in love with Hannibal, and he felt as though he was being drawn into the pull as well. They were a perfect picture, yet he was unsure how or where he fitted in with this life.

"Family values."

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After a few days Will has settled into a new routine with Hannibal, he hates to admit it but having the other man around has made things less stressful. He has time to grade papers without cutting into his own sleep schedule, and he seems to be sleeping better with the herbal tea Hannibal keeps providing.

The tea became a frequent addition after Hannibal had woken him the third night, Will finding himself standing in front of the Samurai armour holding Eros. Hannibal had draped his dressing gown over Will, bringing him into the master bedroom and had not allowed him to leave.

" *I'm a light sleeper."* Hannibal had said as Will curled up under the covers, his limbs cold from the winter air, but relieved that Eros was still fast asleep and warm enough in his onesie. As he watched Hannibal hum gently to Eros as he held him close to his chest, tilting his head to let his cheek rub against the boy as his dark curls tickled the alpha's nose. He was scenting him, a biological response and a protective claim.

It was touching, but Will still found himself wishing for a sleeping bag instead of being forced to sleep in the same bed as Hannibal. The next night, a monitor appeared so both of

them could be aware if Eros woke during the night, and despite Will's protest on the sleeping arrangement, he could not refute Hannibal's logic or protective instinct. As the week progressed though, his dreams were taking on a different nature.

While he still saw bloodshed, victims that he was killing through the Ripper's eyes or the Executioner's, there were moments where his dreams changed. The stag approaching him, or being in the distance, when he followed it, darkness would close in around him. He was never alone in it though, there was something there with him, lurking and enjoying the privacy the darkness offered them both, he could feel the creature's hands touch him, guide him into different positions before claiming him. Yet, in the dreams Will always complied and offered himself to the creature, allowing him to do what he pleased. At times in the dreams when he looked down, the hands that touched him were pitch black, they were warm however, even hot, not cold like the dead. This creature was very much alive and Will felt his body betraying him in responding to it.

He would wake in the morning, finding himself closer to Hannibal, a leg draped over the alpha or a hand on his chest. Sometimes when Hannibal was not there he was sleeping on his side of the bed. One of the worst aspects with this was the fact that while he was still sweating from some dreams, most mornings he was waking half aroused, his cock restricted by the fabric of his underwear and a slickness between his cheeks that made him blush and rush to the toilet in the morning. He felt like a teenager again discovering his secondary gender, what concerned him was that his dreams were not pleasant and his heat was not due for another three months at least.

He had pulled out the prescription Bedelia had given him, looked it up online and seen that producing slick was a side effect, as well as sexual dreams. He grumbled to himself, taking his own action to stop the discharge at night, though he always hated sanitary napkins.

His headaches had started to get worse as the week progressed, and when Jack had found him during his break it felt like they had worsened as he heard the news.

"A body has been found, organs missing, public display. Looks like the Ripper."

A frowned had appeared on Will's face, annoyance etched into his tone. "That's impossible, he sticks to three victims."

"Then you won't mind coming out with us to the scene." Jack spoke, though Will knew to broker no argument with the agent.

Grabbing his phone, he headed out with Jack. The SUV pulled out of the parking space quickly and started to head to the crime scene with little regard for the speed limit. "Found by a jogger, no ID on who the victim is yet, but it won't take us long. Someone is bound to miss them, they always do."

"Won't be long before someone will identify them, I'm sure Freddie Lounds will be finding photos to put up on her website… The Ripper makes statements with his victims, people he feels have done wrong in some way. Not only to him, but to the community. He feels as though it would be better to stamp these people out." replied Will, because it had always been that twisted sense of justice. No one decided by the courts, but one decided by the Ripper. A

set of rules or morals, possibly even ethics that had been broken by his victims that made him believe they were better as food than living any longer.

It didn't take the man that long to get there, and Will was sitting in the car as he looked at the scene. He could already see it, though it was difficult not to notice. Stepping out of the car, the floral scent of cherry blossom's blooming reached his nose. A few petals were falling, and the image of it was serene.

The season was changing, spring was here and it had brought the rain and warmth, everything was growing and flowers were blooming. Druid Hill Park was a place were families visited and lovers enjoyed to walk alongside the lake under the Cherry Blossom's. The Ripper believed it was also a beautiful spot to display his victim, still, he was capable of pulling this off and getting away with it.

There was a loud sigh from Jack before he spoke. "The city's CCTV footage was cut out last night, maintenance repairs. Only those who worked in the park were aware."

Could it have been an inside job or did the Ripper have friends, it seemed unlikely given the status of the people who would work at the park. "Someone else was, we'll need to find out if someone was asking questions to the staff. If someone was interested, though I doubt the Ripper would have been that obvious." Will spoke, but his eyes had not looked away from the victim tied to the tree. "Man or woman?"

"Man." Jack said, a pause before he said the next. "Omega."

Stopping, Will turned to look at Jack then. "The Ripper may not have killed an omega before, but he certainly doesn't discriminate." There was a shrug, a replay of the victims they knew to be associated with the Ripper as he walked to the victim, hearing Jack follow. "Omega, alpha, beta, black or white… This is not about race or biology, Jack. There is nothing simple about the Ripper. He's see's them as pigs."

"But there has to be a pattern, this is not just random or chance. He's an intelligent psychopath."

"Most killers hunt in their own groups, the Ripper doesn't. It's why he is unique… But it's not like 'the son of Sam', it is not completely random. He is choosing them, but we don't know how... just yet."

He could hear Jack stop, that deep breath that he took when he was angered but knew Will was right. There was nothing he could say or do to make this go faster, they needed facts and evidence, something to point them to the Ripper, and Will was there best chance. They knew more on the Ripper now thanks to his assistance.

The petals of the cherry blossoms fell, the wind gently carrying them and painting a beautiful picture. Some landed on the body and around it, others in the lake that reflected the scene. The omega's feet were not touching the ground and Will knew exactly what scene was being painted by the Ripper, though it was his own interpretation on a masterpiece.

His heart beat a little faster in his chest, butterflies formed in his stomach as he stopped inches from the body and saw the open chest cavity. All the organs were removed, except for three. It was theatrical, just as the murders before. Still, the message was completely different, and the meaning was meant for one person alone.

The ground below the body had been dug out so that he was standing on the roots of the tree, some of the roots had been wrapped around the legs to support while the back of the victim was likely held in place by some adhesive, the same medical grade they had found on other victims.

But this tree was not part of the cherry blossoms that were found in Durid Park, it had been brought in specially for displaying the victim. Wrapped around the victim, across the back and over the arms was a white cloth, almost like a robe, it came down to cover the genitalia before it pooled around the victim's feet. Above on the left side was a piece of torn flannel blowing in the gentle breeze, and Will had the distinct impression that it was deliberate. That it was there to represent it being torn from the body of the omega before he was draped in only the finest things money could buy.

The hands of the victim were holding the three organs that were left, in similar positions to where Botticelli's piece had been. The right hand of the victim held the heart and brain, representing emotions and reason, a love of heart and mind. In the left hand was the liver, he was not sure why the liver remained or what it was meant to represent.

Looking at the scene, he had wanted to feel disgust, anger. He felt the complete opposite, there was love and passion, of body and soul. It was a strange and twisted love, but he could feel it within himself, and he was comfortable with it. Looking to the lake, he could see his own reflection, the light behind him illuminating his silhouette, the body in the tree seemed as though it was waiting for him in the reflection. This was a gift, a courtship. An offering for him.

As the knowledge of what it was crossed his mind, he tore his eyes away from the scene, feeling his body shake slightly as his mind raced. He was breathing fast, as he darted from the scene, feeling his body react and break out in a sweat. Only, he wished it was nerves, but the stiffness of the front of his pants, the uncomfortable feeling of being constrained by his underwear told him otherwise.

God, what was wrong with him!?

"Will!" barked Jack, making him jump and swivel, eyes a little wide and frantic.

He knew he was blushing, he could feel the heat in his cheeks and instantly he averted his eyes from his boss.

"It's a love note. A courtship, whoever he wanted to see it has. He's in love, Jack." the reply came out slightly ragged, hand coming up to rub the back of his neck. There was a prickle on the back of his neck, an itch, or more something being etched, closing his eyes for a second, he concentrated on it.

Eyes were on him, he could feel them moving over him watching, hearing whispers that were only inside his own skull, but he concentrated on that feeling, the hot breath and trickle of blood as the word ‘mine’ was drawn into him and spoken in his ear. The voice was scattered, fragmented pieces of a person and some monster. Opening his eyes, Jack was looking at him strangely, he was saying something, but Will couldn’t hear it, only the heavy breathing and clawed hand that rested on his shoulder now.

A quick glance showed him nothing, but in the distance, on the other side of the lake, the stag was there, watching him. Something else nearby, hiding in the darkness, the shadow of the Ripper.

“I feel like he’s still here.” slowly looking back at Jack as he heard his name.

Jack paused for a second, somewhat stunned by what Will had said and his distant tone, but he had finally acknowledged him. “Where were you just now?”

“Inside the Ripper’s head.” Chocolate curls bounced gently as Will shook his head, trying to clear the image. “There is an elegance to this, unlike his other murders. This is meant for one person. The Ripper’s motives have changed completely, he is changing who he is… No, he is accepting something.”

“He’s accepting something by murdering and displaying the bodies?” The disgust was present in Jack’s voice, eyes a little wider as he reclined an inch in his posture, recoiling from Will and his words. From the awful truth that the profiler could see.

A smile graced Will’s features, relaxing as he looked back to the work for a moment before walking closer to Jack. “The Ripper has a psychological background as well as medical. This is his art, this is his self exploration into his own self and to explore the outcomes, it’s creative psychotherapy.”

“Through murder?!” Jack deadpanned.

“There is such an elegance in suffering, if you look close enough.”

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Standing to the side, Will watches as Price, Zeller and Bev examine the mutilated corpse. His arms are crossed over his chest, feet apart in a defensive stance. A cold bead of sweat runs down his spine, he flinches. It’s not the sweat that bothers him, more the sense that it feels like a finger, like the Ripper is still there.

This entire performance feels dedicated to him, first the key hauling victim at a boat yard, then the father and son. This body however is not an aspect of his life, it is how his life could be so much better by the Ripper, he is courting him.

Part of him knows he needs to tell Jack, if the agent believes him is another story. The Ripper seems to be a step ahead, aware of the investigation that is going on. But with this love note the article written by Freddie Lounds will be forgotten, he is grabbing people’s attention again with his grotesque beauty.

“Its not strange that he left the brain, heart and liver. In Greek medicine Galen wrote about how the brain gave reason, the heart emotions and the liver was passion.” Through the clear visor Jimmy Price looks to Will, to enthused about the corpse. “That’s why it's acceptable to give your partner a bottle of whisky.”

The line actually makes Will huff with a smile, Bev looking to him next as she jokes “See? It’s acceptable to show your affection with cheap beer and pizza!”

“Unless she’s a non-drinker. Then you should stick with your chocolates.” Zeller adds, a tiny scowl forming.

Bev nudges him in the side, making the man look at her with a frown. “I’d rather you pour me a glass of bourbon every morning instead of that kale smoothie she made you drink!”

“It didn’t taste that bad.”

“Yeah,” laughed Bev, leaning back over the body as she reached in and took a swab from the victim’s mouth. “That’s why you threw them out in the car park.”

Jimmy snorted at Zeller being exposed, even Will had to grin. Their smiles faded when Jack entered the room, the atmosphere becoming thicker with tension. “Do we know what time of death was? Or cause?”

“Mutilation,” Jimmy spoke, moving away from the body before going over and pulling out lab results from the blood work they had just started doing. “As for time of death, it is hard to determine, we are getting different results from the organs the Ripper left and the body… It looks like he tried to preserve them, the organs more than the corpse.”

“The organs were the first pieces he removed, set them aside, froze them.” Will started, walking around the table as he looked at the corpse. It had surprisingly come down from the tree quite easily. “He wanted to present them as gifts, tokens of his affection.”

“Could the trophies that the Ripper has been taking just all be tokens?” Jack stepped away from the body, Will could see him trying to fit the pieces of the puzzle together, but like himself, parts were missing.

“No,” Will looked to the ceiling, thinking back to the father and son he had found left out by the Ripper. “He’s… He’s eating them.”

For a seasoned group of crime scene investigators, there was still a visible shift in the room at the mention of that word.

“These organs were left for the person the Ripper is trying to court.” continued Will, tasting bile in the back of his throat. “The Ripper wants him to know that he is infatuated, body, mind and soul.”

Jack’s eyes narrowed at Will slightly, walking towards him. “You said him?”

Swallowing hard, Will backed away until he touched the bench, Jack crowding him as he waited for an answer. “I-” It was difficult to say, he had already been wrong before, could he

be again? “I think this… the victim is a gift… The Ripper may be courting me.”

Zeller stared at Will for a moment before looking to Jimmy and Bev who were still staring at Will. The unwanted attention made his skin crawl, bringing a hand up to rub the back of his necks as he looked away.

“Why would someone want to court you?” Zeller said finally, breaking the unsettling silence. “I mean, you have a kid Will, you’re not exactly courting material-” he was cut off by Bev who elbowed him hard in the chest, making Zeller cough and shoot her an annoyed look.

“My office.” Jack spoke, looking at Will before he left, tone harsh. “And not another word Zeller!” stated as he was leaving, a hand coming up to stop the technician from even thinking about speaking.

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Will had gone to the bathroom before going to meet Jack, washing his face as he stared at himself in the mirror for a second. Zeller’s words still echoed in his ears and he could hear Zeller’s thoughts being hissed at him. Eyes closed as he tried to find peace, to let the thoughts be replaced by something else. Eros came to mind, replaying the moment where he had said his first word, where he had called for him.

It worked, for now. Feeling himself calm, his thoughts shift to easier topics. Grabbing the paper towel, he dried his face before he walked into Jack’s office, the door had not completely shut before the alpha’s voice boomed at him, demanding to know.

“How long have you suspected the Ripper has been trying to court you?”

There was a wince, hearing Jack say it made it feel even more real. “Since the first body, but not courting, not until this body.”

“What about the first body holds relevance to you?” continued Jack, trying to get to the bottom of what was happening under his nose.

“I’d been to that shipping yard when I was younger, my father took a job there for a few months. Anyone could know that,” Will spoke, trying to make Jack listen. “It’s not that hard to look up my father’s history, or mine if you have the resources, which we know the Ripper does.”

“Well help me understand something here, Will, because the second scene did not exactly look anything like a love note.” Jack’s voice was raising, becoming louder with each word spoken. “A father and son had been murdered, and now you are being offered organs.” A fist came down on the desk, making Will twitch and turn away. His eyes looked out the glass window to see people looking at Jack’s office, curious what had the head of the BAU so worked up. “Is he trying to court you, or is he wanting to kill you?”

“The second scene wasn’t about just murder, Jack.” Will retorted, feeling his anger starting to surge forth. “It was about traditions and family… He wants to start a family, or more he wants me to be his family!”

“Christ Will, why did you not think to tell me this sooner!” Finally Jack sat down, hand coming up to run over his mouth as he thought.

Quietly, Will walked forward, coming closer to the desk but remaining on his feet. “Would you have believed me if I said that earlier?” he threw out sarcastically, getting a glare from Jack before the man gave a sigh.

“You still have have told me your suspicions. This victim could be for anyone, as you said yourself, you have already been wrong with the Ripper.”

“I just hope I am now,” Will spoke, more for himself and his own well being. Looking to Jack, he saw the man had nothing more to say or add, he left the office and went to go and see Alana instead. He could use a friend right now.

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Knocking on Alana’s door, he heard voices and something being done up. Taking a step back, Will waited for the door to open, hands in his pockets. When it eventually did, he came face to face with Margot Verger, not someone he knew well but had read and heard about.

“Excuse me,” Her tone was stern, but he could see the surprise written in her eyes, the flush that was in her cheeks.

Will stepped out of her way, watching her leave, she paused to look back before she continued on. Alana came to greet him, leaving the office as she took Will by the arm and walked down to the cafeteria.

“How long have you been dating?” Will smiled.

“It’s not what you think it is.” A hand came up to comb through her hair in an effort to try and straighten it. She flashed him a smile, knowing Will was already figuring it out. She couldn’t be angry at him for knowing, at least he would respect her privacy.

“She likes you.” Studying Alana, he could see it clear as day. “And you like her too.”

Alana paused, looking at Will. There was a second where she looked as though she was about to roll her eyes but then thought better of it. “We’re just friends… With benefits.”

It made Will laugh, to which Alana shook her head but smiled. “Just, don’t tell anyone. We’re keeping it quiet until we can sort things out.”

“Sounds like some of the rumors I have heard are true then.”

“More than you know,” sighed Alana. “She still wears the scars, mental and physical. I don’t know exactly how we are going to be together, more so when we have to keep meeting in private.”

Chewing on his tongue, he decided to ask the obvious and to get a feel for Alana’s reaction. “Is it because of her brother?” Walking into the crowded area, they made their way to a table in the middle, knowing no one would hear them speak.

“He’s difficult, she can’t exactly leave.” Alana took a seat, sitting with a leg crossed over the other, Will could see the pain she felt for Margot and her situation. “If she leaves, she gets nothing, and it is not that I won’t support her. She is afraid that her brother will come for her, and that because we are both alpha’s, he may use it against her.”

Reaching across, Will took Alana’s hand in his own, holding it firmly as he spoke. “I’m sure you will find a way, I don’t doubt you are both trying… I’m not going to tell Jack.”

Alana gave Will a weak smile, at least pleased that he was not telling her to stop or how to live her life. Though she felt guilt now for pulling him out and into a crowded area, having wanted to avoid being alone with him in a room.

Chapter 7

Since making Will share the same bed, Hannibal has discovered that the unconscious sleepwalking omega has an appetite that is not quenched. The tea that he has introduced to Will's night routine has been crucial in allowing Hannibal to see Will in his unconscious state more often, and opened his mind and enabled him to whisper in his ear.

The thought of taking Will while he is in this state has occurred to him, their previous coital activity still plays in his mind and just how good Will felt, the noises he made and how he had asked for it. Hannibal's own lips still tingle as he remembers the most recent kiss, though brief, he found it passionate. Will is truly very kissable.

While Hannibal knows he could bed an unconscious Will and mount him, take his own pleasure, he refrains from doing so. Will is not in heat, there is no biological urge within him to be mated, it is pure unconscious lust at this point, and to engage in sex with Will in this state would almost be like rape. To bring Will into a heat however, the conscious mind would be aware of what the body craves and look for a source that could sate it's need. An alpha more appropriately.

This is where the herbal tea and sleeping with Hannibal has the unfortunate effect, allowing Hannibal to imprint on Will and fool his body and his unconscious mind into thinking that he is his alpha. Because Hannibal wants to claim Will.

These things take time, and patience, waiting for the drugs he has now changed without Will's knowledge. Will's hormones will fluctuate, the encephalitis will attack his own mind and Will shall fall more to base instinct and try to clutch at the stability he has in his life. It is why Hannibal is playing his role, both the instigator in setting fire to his mind and the man able to extinguish the flames. He is holding all the cards that would make a royal flush, and is waiting for Will to fold his hand.

As he sits reading his tablet, looking at Freddie Lounds coverage of the recent Ripper murder, he smiles and turns it off when a hand gently paws at his chest. Nails scraping against his skin and making Hannibal rumble slightly for the way his body yearns for Will's contact. He turns to see Will inching closer, eyes unfocused with sleep as he lets his head come to rest in Hannibal's lap.

He gently strokes the omega, fingers trying to tame curls to no avail as he feels Will's hot breath against his stirring member. The tickle of his curls against his naked chest as he breathes.

A purr almost escapes Will as Hannibal continues to gently stroke his hair, the gentle gesture soothing the omega as he inhales Hannibal's scent greedily. When he speaks, his tone is gravelly from sleep, slightly rough and a hint of a southern accent. Hannibal is fully aware Will's conscious mind is not here, though others who would hear him speak now, look into Will's eyes, they would not be aware he was having an episode as Will appears quite normal. "Not alone."

“What did you see?” He’s curious, it has been interesting to learn some of Will’s unconscious connections. To hear about the creature that follows him, and what is waiting in the darkness for him.

An intake of breath before Will’s body momentarily freezes, his head turns slightly to the doorway as eyes look for something Hannibal can not see. “Antlers and feathers… A stag, but it’s not normal.”

“Tell me more about the stag you see,” he asks, keeping his tone soft. Will had mentioned it not long ago, a curious thing his unconscious mind had projected.

Hannibal strongly believes the stag is a creation of Will’s imagination, an image of him in a sense. Designed to pull the omega to him, considering their compatibility. They are true mates after all, he hopes Will can become aware sooner than later, so long as it falls into his plan. As for what lurks in the darkness, he knows it is himself, he will always be standing beside Will, not leaving him alone in the darkness.

“It follows, with a shadow.” Hands clutching at the sheets, Will’s body tensing for a second. “He’s here, with the stag, I can feel him… He wants me to know, I’m his.” In Will’s mind he can hear the word ‘mine’ repeated over and over.

“What is he saying?” The gentle push, watching Will’s body shake slightly as Hannibal moves his hand to calm the man.

Harsh whispering voices of many he can not make out, but he pauses when he feel’s Hannibal’s hand on the back of his neck, stilling as he says the word aloud. “Mine,”

Lips slowly curve up into a smile, sharp canines bared as Hannibal gently brushes his fingers over the place on Will’s neck where he will bite him to form a bond. It seems dear Will has remembered what he has said to him, that he already belongs to someone and that he is carrying a version of him within the omega’s mind already. “Soon.”

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“I kissed Hannibal.”

The admission feels like it is thrown into the ring, like a challenger throwing a gauntlet. Will watches Bedelia’s eyes widen slightly, the small shock that is present on her face for a fraction of a second before it is perfectly schooled again.

“What was the reaction?” She simply asks, tipping her chin up as she stares at Will now, watching and looking for honesty.

There is a shrug before he looks away, feeling a little flushed. “Better than what I anticipated. It was reciprocated.”

“So your advance was not reject, instead it was welcomed and returned.” It is an insight into Hannibal Bedelia has the rare glimpse of. The veil he normally wears seems to shift dramatically when he is with Will, a more human persona, true intentions showing through

with his own emotions, not the reflection of someone else's. "Yet you have only said you have kissed Hannibal, nothing more has come of this physical interaction between you?"

A frown settled over Will's face, swallowing as he took in Bedelia's observation. "I shouldn't have kissed him, he believes I am interested in him now. Romantically."

"You say this while you are living at his house and both raising a child… You seem to be giving him opportunities you did not allow him before, yet you fail to acknowledge your own emotions. If past behaviour is a prediction of future behaviour, you may find yourself in a similar situation again." Bedelia spoke with a hint of satisfaction at making Will uncomfortable as she hinted at the act of sex and unplanned pregnancy.

"It was just a kiss… I'm still curious as to why he finds me interesting, why he has not taken one of the omega's that has probably been paraded to him by his other friends or acquaintances." There was a slight grumble to his last few words, he knew the high society that Hannibal mingled with, how they tended to show off their sons or daughters to potential suitors. Hannibal was a bachelor, an unmated thoroughbred alpha still despite having Eros. While others would have been concerned about what was said about them, Will did not care what was said about him.

"It is not everyday that Hannibal would meet someone like you. Intelligent, smart and able to understand his point of view." She was very aware that there was a darkness to Will, something she saw in Hannibal, it lurked within the man before her. The pair almost seemed deserving of each other. "Perhaps you are more alike than you realise."

The statement was mulled over silently for a moment by Will, looking at his current situation and what had happened. What had led him to staying with Hannibal and now sharing a bed with him as well. It was more than just a simple kiss. Living with Hannibal was easy than what he had expected, and while Will still told himself he was not interested in Hannibal, the truth was it was starting to grow on him, the idea of being with the man. Being with Hannibal was different, in a good sense. Having the ability to understand his own emotions and space had been refreshing, along with someone who was not afraid of him or deliberately avoided him.

The clock chimed, indicating that the hour was up. But Will didn't move from his spot, nor did Bedelia.

"I take it you are on the medication?" She asked, head tilted to the side.

Biting on his lower lip, Will gave a jerky nod. "With side effects."

"The medication needs time, if you are still experiencing problems in another two to three weeks, we can look at changing." Bedelia spoke, wrapping up the session when she stood to indicate the session was over. Watching as Will left in silence, eyes alert however as his mind processed what they had talked about, she shut the door and left him to figure it out.

After she heard the engine of his car start, she poured a glass of wine, the images of the events that had happened not so long ago replaying in her mind along with Hannibal's intervention and his so called assistance. How far was the alpha willing to push Will, and

what intentions did he have for him. She knew that Hannibal would take Will as a mate, there were plans for him. Something she was not aware of.

Looking at the phone, she considered for a moment, calling her former patient and telling him to stop, then she had no reason to and doing so would impede on the distance she had placed between herself and the alpha. Whatever he was playing at, she had a front row seat to the performance, and without a doubt she knew Hannibal would be pleased to have such a captive audience unable to leave his show.

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Freddie Lounds had wasted no time in publishing an article about the Ripper's latest murder, along with the change that was present in the murder itself, or more the presentation. Will didn't know how, but someone had tipped her off that it was a love note for Will and she drew attention to it rather obviously but also not mentioning his name. The term 'special agent' was used, along with 'the omega profiler it was intended for continues to actively work the murder investigation and attend scenes'.

"Tasteless," sneered Will, pushing the tablet away from him as he went back to feeding Eros dinner. The greek yoghurt and apple puree Hannibal had made was going down well.

"While her article draws attention, it is more for the shock horror value than the writing itself. Ms Lounds seems to be the only one bold enough to post her opinion on the Ripper." Hannibal commented.

Will looked to him, watching him stir the chocolate in the pot on the stove. It was the desert he was preparing for their dinner, made from scratch of course. The jug next to him was filled with fresh blood, cow's blood Hannibal had said. Retrieved from his butcher the day before. It was finally added into the saucepan and Will watched Hannibal stir it briefly before looking back to Eros.

Picking up the jug of blood from his latest victim, Hannibal begun to add it gradually to the melted chocolate. Stirring it continuously to get a smooth consistency. "I'm more concerned about what the Executioner has planned, given the Ripper's public rejection." More the lives that would be affected, the more bodies they would find. "With the article Ms Lounds has published he may turn his attention to the object of the Ripper's affection."

It made Will cringe slightly, to hear it spoken aloud. In truth though, he had been thinking on it himself, what it would mean for the Executioner and how the killer would handle the situation. Jack seemed convinced now that the victim in the tree was for Will, but when he had approached the higher ups they had not believed him and refused Jack's request for a protection detail. Will had wondered how many more bodies they would have drop before they actively did something, or did he have to get a note written in blood delivered to him, or perhaps an organ?

Bringing a spoon to Eros's mouth, Will waited for the boy to open before he guided it in, watching half of it come back out and fall on the bib. "I believe the Executioner will try to seek the Ripper, that has always been what he has desired… It may be more sexual in nature than we first thought, given how the Ripper left a love note."

“Perhaps it could have been both.” Turning off the stove, Hannibal set the saucepan to the side as he brought out the oranges he had hollowed out. Carefully, he poured the Sanguinaccio dolce into them and then placed them in the fridge afterwards to cool.

“You think the Ripper was aware?” Will asked, looking at Hannibal’s back as he placed the tray into the fridge.

“As you yourself mentioned, the scene was completely different for the Ripper, yet at the same time he was leaving his signature. It could have been a message for the Executioner as well as a love note for the person of the Ripper’s desires.”

Could the Executioner have been in love with the Ripper?

Will considered the possibilities that Hannibal presented. The Executioner had started off looking for a friend, found someone who shared his interest and reached out. It could have then evolved into an obsession and the Executioner fell in love with the Ripper who turns out to be in love with someone else. Will can clearly see why the Executioner would be hurt by those actions, a jealous lover scorned. Or someone who believed they were a lover.

“One of the first victims in the Ripper’s sounder, the phone was found to be in his rectum, where a knot would tie and where the male omega anatomy would be. Perhaps he knew the Executioner had romantic intentions to him.” The images of the scene were being looked over again in his mind, at the time they had thought nothing of it because of their victim, perhaps there was another message to it they did not understand. This could have been the reason as to why the Ripper choose that victim, to send a message.

As the phone rang, drawing Will back, he watched Hannibal pick up his mobile to answer it before he heard the mention of Jack’s name and the change in Hannibal’s tone. WIll held out his hand, swapping the phone for the bowl of yoghurt and the spoon as he stood.

“Will, couldn’t get you on your mobile.” Jack greeted.

“I’ve been turning it off at dinner time, Jack.”

There was a sigh, Will knew Jack could understand but at the same time he didn’t. The alpha did not have children of his own and he was married to his job more than his mate.
“Baltimore P.D. called me just before, there a murder they want us to look at. Not sure exactly what it is, but they don’t want to touch it.”

“That’s never a good sign,” sighed Will, feeling a dull ache begin behind his eyes already.

“I’m sending you the address, shouldn’t be too far from Hannibal’s home.”

The call is ended before Jack says anything more, Will looks to see Hannibal scooping out some of the chocolate he has been cooking from the saucepan, feeding a small bit of it to Eros with a smile. He watches the boy’s face light up in delight at the taste and hears the squeal of joy.

“You’re going to make him have a real sweet tooth.” laughs Will, seeing no harm in only letting the boy have one spoonful. He has tried to introduce him to a range of things, but this is the first time that he has had chocolate.

“Only the best for this little prince.” Hannibal says.

Will pauses, staring at Hannibal for a few seconds. It’s the first time the alpha has used a term of endearment on the boy, one that he has heard. But as Eros laughs, it seems he has heard it before and Will wonders for a brief moment, with all that has been going on with his work, keeping up with the murder investigations, how much of this time has he missed with Eros. The quicker these murders are solved, the killers caught, the sooner he can spend time with his son again, maybe even work on becoming an actual family if this keeps up.

“You’re not staying for dinner I take it?” Hannibal asks, already knowing the answer. It is a moment he savours as Will sheds his defenses and lets his shoulders slump slightly. Moving closer, he scoops some of the remnants of chocolate onto the plastic spoon and smiles at Will. “Luckily desert will be ready for when you return.”

The offered spoon with chocolate on it makes Will smile, opening his mouth as he lets Hannibal bring it closer before he tastes the sweet rich flavour. "It's good." He hasn’t tasted anything like it before, while some may be offended by the blood the flavour mixes perfectly.

Watching Will lick his lips and taste the remnants fills Hannibal with an urge to lean forward and lick. Instead, he brings a finger to the corner of Will’s lips and swipes the small dribble that is there. Taking his finger away as Will blushes.

“I should go,” Will says, turning as he leaves straight away.

He doesn’t stay to watch Hannibal bring the finger to his own mouth and suck on the digit gently as his eyes close and imagine what flavours would best work with Will.

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Unsure what to expect, Will arrived at the location that had been sent to his phone. Parking his volvo behind Jack’s SUV. The police cars were there, lights on without the sirens and as he stepped out of the car the silence of the scene echoed around him. Every footstep he took, he could hear the crunch of grass of the scuff of gravel against his shoes.

Jack was at the foot of the stairs to the old asylum that had been converted to a hospital before being abandoned. The expression he wore was hard, unflinching. Used to seeing some of the worst, Will wondered if there was possibly anything that could truly shock them now?

“Abandoned building, forgotten in time… You know who’s profile this fits, but take a look, it is different to the last scene, or any scene that the Executioner has left us before.” Jack spoke, not waiting for Will as he marched up the stairs.

Will’s eyes fell to the foot path, the rose petals that were scattered, a trail left to be followed, like bread crumbs or a romantic gesture.

The police officers who had responded were staying out of the way, but all eyes were on Jack and Will. Watching them walk into the building before a few whispered to each other, some placings bets while others gave them a pitying glance.

Nerves already fluttered in Will's stomach, as he pulled out his flashlight and followed Jack he read the inscription over the entrance, feeling a chill run down his spine. Psychically, he jerked and Jack turned to look at him, a slight from.

"What's wrong?" Jack says, turning his flashlight on Will.

"Always feel a tad nervous going into these places." Will admits, feeling a slight sweat build. "I'm afraid they won't let me out."

For a few moments, Jack just looks at him before he turns and pushes open the door. "I won't leave you here."

They walked together slowly, Will staying closer to Jack than normal as he let his flashlight roam the room. Finally, they both found the body at the end of the hallway. It was under the stairs, surrounded by more rose petals. But when Will moved his flashlight up over the body, it didn't take him long to determine the cause of death.

"I'm going to wait here." Jack spoke, stopping about fifteen feet from the body.

There was a shaky nod from Will, guessing that the whole scene had not been thoroughly searched yet due to the vast size of the building and that it was dark. Part of him was glad to have Jack close, knowing he was not alone in the darkness. But as he took in the scene, and he closed his eyes, the Ripper's voice whispered in his ear.

"I'm standing right beside you."

The scene started to deconstruct in his mind, first the flower petals vanishing as the pendulum swooped, then the rope that bound the victim's wrists over his head, next his body became whole and finally the man was wide eyed looking at him.

I don't have a personal grudge against you , Will thinks as he straddles the man. Placing his hand over the other's mouth to muffle his screams as he grabs his weapon of choice. The breast ripper is heavy in his hand, the metal prongs spaced well apart and sharp at the end, designed to tear flesh from the body. *It's just I despise that you have what I don't. He doesn't want someone like me, he wants someone like you.*

The man screams as the metal prongs cut into his pectoral muscle before pulling away, the flesh of the man's breast coming off with jagged tears as blood flows freely. The second breast is done as Will stands and looks down at his victim, the blood pooling under him as he moves weakly on the floor. But this is not enough, there is still another part he needs to destroy. One that makes jealousy bloom in his chest, the anger making his skin heat as his hand gripped the cold metal of the breast ripper.

Using his foot, he stands on one of the victim's legs as he gets the breast ripper, hovering over the man's stomach as he looks, trying to find what he wants. As he see's the spot, he

pushes the metal prongs into the abdomen, moving them down past the intestines as he wiggles them searching for the womb and ovaries until he believes he has them finally. With an almighty pull they spew forth from his abdominal cavity and spill on the floor as the man takes a shallow last breath before staying still. Glazed eyes staring out into darkness.

Will open his eyes, looking back to Jack as he trembles slightly, teeth chattering in the cold. “The Executioner is back.”

Jack’s footsteps echoed in the hall as he came closer, letting out a long deep breath as he looked at the victim. “His methods haven’t changed.”

“He’s still fascinated with medieval torture, but he’s not looking for friendship or courtship anymore. He wants to make the Ripper’s love pay handsomely.” Will couldn’t take his eyes from the victim and the brutality of his death. “This, is just the beginning.”

A shiver ran down his back, he knew who the intended victim was and as he looked to Jack and saw the man’s eyes harden on him slightly. They were both very aware Will was the intended target of the Executioner’s wrath.

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

So I know I have spoken about de-actibvating this account, and I have pulled everything I had on tumblr down as I was just going to erase it all.But a lot of people want some stories finished. And I have them outlined, starting a new accounting and posting the old stories is not really going to give the anonymity I want, but at least here I can moderate comments and things.

So while I would love to share on tumblr, I'm not there with fic anymore. But I will check here occasionally and try to reply to comments when I can

THERE will be a delay in chapter 9 & 10 due to Real Life circumstances. I have not finished writing and editing I'm sorry. But this work will be completed!

Please be patient while I try and get to this, but I hope you enjoy it so far!
and as always, thank you for your comments and kudo's and just your general support and love.

AO3 is far kinder than other social media sights!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Returning back to Hannibal's home, Will had gone straight to the bathroom to shower, letting the hot water ease the ache he could feel starting in his body. He wanted to see Eros, to kiss the boy goodnight, but with how sick he felt, he deemed it better to stay away in case what he had was contagious, so he went to curl up in the bed.

Hannibal was already in bed when he stepped back in the room, reading on his tablet as he looked over to see Will, his eyes narrowed slightly as Will came closer. Concern shining through when the man finally joined him in bed.

"How are you feeling?"

A broken smile appeared on Will's face, turning to look at Hannibal. "Like crap," came the honest reply.

It was unexpected to watch Hannibal put the tablet down, to turn his attention completely on him as he raised his hand and felt Will's forehead. Heat was radiating from Will's body from the shower and the fever, but Will leaned into the cool touch of Hannibal's hand, closing his eyes as he felt relief over someone caring for him instead of the other way round.

"You're running a fever, again." Hannibal spoke calmly, not pulling his hand away.

“I think I caught something.”

“Then you should stay in bed and rest, have you taken an aspirin?”

Will hummed, a gentle nod as he moved closer to Hannibal, appreciating the contact of the other man. It was good to feel so close to another, someone caring for him while he was ill, as a kid he never had that from his own mother or his father.

“I’ll go and make you something. Stay. Rest.” Hannibal gently cupped Will’s face before brushes a few stray curls back. Will sighed and laid down, doing what was asked. A weight lifting from his shoulders as Hannibal left the bed and pulled the duvet over Will.

It didn’t take him long to return with a small bowl of the chicken soup he had been preparing for the next day. Having earlier seen Will feeling ill, he had made it in advance. Gently, he set it on the bedside table as Will stirred, rolling over to look at him.

“You made me chicken soup?” It was a surprise, curious if the alpha had made it or had it come from a can.

“You have been putting a great deal of stress on yourself these past few days, I thought it would help to boost your immune system and kick whatever cold you may have currently caught.”

There was a small gentle smile, handing the bowl over to Will as the omega sat up in the bed. Looking down at the ingredients in the bowl of soup he knew it had been home made, instead he welcomed the attention for a change. “Thank you.” Will was truly grateful that Hannibal was there, looking after not only him now but Eros too, it was touching.

The spoon dipped into the soup, lifting it as he sipped on the liquid before eating the vegetables, tasting the ginger and pepper. He could feel it already starting to clear his head and sinuses, warming him from the inside.

Hannibal watched Will eat, how his lips shined in the dim light from the liquid, adam’s apple bobbing when he swallowed. How Will sucked on his bottom lip at times before the tongue darted out to run over it, tasting the juices that were left behind.

As Will finished, he handed the bowl back to Hannibal silently. It had felt intimate, to have the doctor watch his every move, yet touching to know he cared.

The bowl was taken away as Will laid down, he curled up under the covers feeling his body ache still. The bed dipped as Hannibal joined him again, and Will had the urge to move closer and seek Hannibal’s embrace, to have his hands on him again. Hannibal was safe, free from the horrors of the world around them, he never judge him for what his imagination showed him. It had been chipping away at Will just how supportive and caring Hannibal had been, not only to Eros but himself as well.

Maybe when all this was over, and they caught the Ripper or the Executioner, just maybe he could tell Hannibal his feelings and they could try to be a family. It was not Hannibal who

had the wall up though, Will knew he had to pull down his defences brick by brick and confront his own emotions on the situation.

It was easy to fall asleep surrounded by Hannibal's scent, it seemed to put him at ease. Feeling the bed dip, he knew Hannibal had joined him, the blanket being brought up over him to tuck him in.

He reached out, touching the alpha's chest as he opened his eyes again to watch his hand run gently through the alpha's chest hair. Trailing down Hannibal's belly before he took it away, moving the covers as he shifted to then push Hannibal back on the bed and sit on his lap. Leaning forward to kiss parted lips as he started to palm Hannibal's stiffening cock.

They were not alone however, as Will moved he could feel hot breath on the back of his neck, whispered words in his ear he could not distinguish and the press of hot lips that were not Hannibal's. He knew it was the Chesapeake Ripper. Dark hands appeared on just under his chin before they curled around his neck to choke as teeth bit into the back of his neck and he was pulled backwards as he screamed. Not in terror, but ecstasy. Moaning loudly as his hips rocked on Hannibal and the Ripper drew blood and lapped at it with his tongue, feeling his chest rumble as he felt Hannibal coming undone under him as he grinded against the alpha's cock.

A shattering groan woke him as he laid in bed panting hearing the alarm clock, feeling the sweat on his body as his heart beat wildily in his chest. The underpants he wore were sticky, a coldness settling in the front telling him of the orgasm and the slickness between his cheeks. Face flushing as he shot a glance to the side, seeing he was alone, he went to the bathroom and cleaned himself, coming back to remove the evidence from the bed as he changed the sheets.

Today was a new day, one he would spend looking at victims of the killers he hunted and who in turn hunted him. No matter what he did that morning, he could still almost feel what it was like to be in the dream still, to touch Hannibal and feel the Ripper's touch as well. While he felt disgust and showed it as he moved, a small part of him whispered and reminded him of just how good it felt in the dream, and how good it could be in real life.

Licking his lips as he made his coffee, he knew just how good Hannibal could be with sex. For a brief second he pictured the alpha biting him, leaving marks on him as they fucked like animals, pushing it aside as he sipped on his coffee and admonished himself again.

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"Hannibal," sighing as he watched the doctor struggle, Will wanted to laugh, but doing so would most likely upset the man. Winston and Zoe wondered around the front yard while the Bentley was in the driveway, Eros inside napping giving both men time to try and change the car seat that had originally been fitted. "You could of had the shop install it when you brought it."

Winston walked over to where the old car seat was, sticking his nose inside as he sniffed. His tail wagged and soon enough Will watched Zoe come over, grabbing one of the toys left

behind and bolting off with it. Will rolled his eyes, knowing he was not going to find it as she would most likely bury it somewhere.

The convertible car seat refused to sit where Hannibal had wanted it to, the instructions had been discarded and were useless anyway. “If it actually had measurements and how to fit it to a Bentley, I would not have an issue.”

Rolling his eyes, Will doubted very much that the people who made Bentley’s ever expected one to be fitted with a car seat. “I’m afraid they were probably thinking more of what came before kids. If I recall correctly, that backseat is quite spacious.”

Hannibal paused, turning to look at Will as his hair flopped in his face. Admiring the man, he gave him a smirk. “Yet you still complained at the time you were uncomfortable… I take it my son’s namesake came because of this very car.”

“Our son.” Will corrected with a smile. “There are many translations for his name, not all based around sexual desire or erotic love.” It was of course after he had chosen the name that Will learned of the greek meaning behind it, but he had stood firm and kept it. “It was more the concept of love. It seemed fitting. As well as something original, uncommon.”

Staying still, Hannibal considered it for a moment, the knowledge he had of what Will had spoken of. Of wanting a family but a difficulty in creating connections, maintaining boundaries. A child would be easier to raise, a paternal instinct to care and nurture. A love for his own flesh and blood, something Hannibal was understanding more each day. “At least you did not name him Hannibal,” admitted with humour, he certainly remembered some of the teasing he had endured for the name throughout the years, though none of it ever had bothered him before.

Sheepishly, Will looked away. “It’s his middle name,” he admitted. “I’ll always be forever grateful he came into my life, our lives. I merely hoped that he would at least be able to have somewhat of a normal life” to have a relationship when he does grow up, a family of his own Will thought to himself.

“A love that is just more than sexual needs or desires.” Hannibal nodded, forgetting the car seat as he moved and stood up straight, letting out a sigh at not fitting the seat properly yet. “I had wanted to give you more, perhaps you will see that now you are here.” He moved closer to Will, the man standing still as he watched him yet not making eye contact. Stopping a few inches from him, reaching out to cup Will’s cheek as he tilted his chin.

Leaning into the touch, Will closed his eyes, appreciating the comfort Hannibal provided as he finally spoke of Eros’s name and letting Hannibal know he was always going to be a part of the boy’s life. “I’m not sure if you will still want me when all this is done and we have caught our killers… I’ll be different.”

“And I will love you regardless, Will.” There was a moment where he wanted to lean in and kiss him, but suspecting it may have been unwelcomed, he settled for picking up Will’s hand and kissing the back of it.

“Never say never, right?” Will smiled, somewhat sad because he still did not believe it himself. “But you should really finish installing that car seat, unless you want to take the Volvo tomorrow.”

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Jack’s office held photos of all the murder victims of both the Executioner and the Ripper. All were pinned to their own boards, the names attached to each one as Will looked at them with Beverly standing next to him.

It had been just over two weeks since they had found the victim of the Executioner in the abandoned asylum. Jake Gillepsi was only thirty four, mated and had two children with his alpha partner Michael. Will had been there for the interview Jack conducted with Michael, watched the man come to terms with his mate’s death and then accompanied Michael to see the body. What still struck Will as odd, was how the Executioner knew about Jake, given the omega had been staying at home constantly for the last year after being mugged. It raised more questions as to how the Executioner knew his victims and their schedule’s.

The Ripper however had been busy, leaving two more bodies with the same organs and flowers at each scene. Will had been curious if this was a new sounder, or a continuation. Though the change between the first sounder and the second had been vast. The first he gathered were designed to draw his attention, to pull him in. The second were gifts, as Bev had said, flowers and chocolate, though the chocolate in the Ripper’s case had been offal. The second and third victim in the Ripper’s second sounder had also both their lungs intact, and flowers growing within them, vibrant blues and blood reds standing out against the pink of the organs and the potting mix that lined the lungs and allowed the flowers to grow. The creepiest part was that having to see the victims almost everyday, the flowers were still growing, the lungs were beds for them.

Bev made the unfortunate connection between the flowers and Will, pulling him to the side as she told him the name of the flower. His cheeks had heated to learn they were ‘sweet William’, that the Ripper was stepping up his game. When no one had been looking, he did pluck a flower from each of the bodies, taking it to his office where he opened up his own copy of his book. They were hidden in the chapter of larvae that could be birthed from the body after death, after insects had laid their eggs there. It seemed fitting to him in a strange sense, but he had to admit to himself, despite being horrified and reluctant, he was falling for the Ripper. The beauty he presented in the horror, one that Will could not look away from, so visceral in his love. Yet at the same time he was also opening himself up to Hannibal and enjoying his time more with the doctor, the soft smiles, the attention he received and the love that Hannibal had for their son. It felt like he was being ripped down the middle, each only having a half of him to cherish. But he couldn’t give himself entirely to the Ripper, nor could he for Hannibal. One was a man, the other was a beast. And how could either love him when Will knew deep down that he was both.

The Ripper was so different to the Executioner, as Will looked at the victim's his mind often referred to the beauty he saw.

Elegance in suffering.

But what would you do if your art was not considered good enough? What if your work was rejected?

There was an ache behind his eyes, the longer he spent looking at the pictures the more painful that ache became. Will knew he couldn't see what he needed to, attempting to look closely at the Ripper and the Executioner resulted in nothing more than confusion. It made it feel like his reality was shifting, then at times it was, he didn't feel like himself, there was something wrong. Hannibal had already told him he needed rest, that he should take time off, but in truth Will knew he couldn't.

"Looks like the Executioner has struck again, same scene as last time. It just came in." Jack announced as he walked into the room drawing Will from his thoughts.

Beverly moved right away, picking up her coffee. "That's never a good thing."

"It could be." admitted Will. "Using the same location, this is a first. He's always moved around, but this may indicate that he is slipping. He could be getting sloppy, and we may actually have evidence." There was a note of hope in his voice, but not within himself. An unease settled over him knowing he was heading back to the asylum, a discomfort he wasn't sure came from the killer involved or the building itself. Probably both.

"Let's catch this son of a bitch." growled Jack, making both Will and Bev move.

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It was the middle of the day, unlike the last scene where it had been discovered at night. The asylum did not seem to be as creepy as what it had before. Seeing the police out the front waiting, Will knew from the sick bag one cop was holding it was going to be a grizzly scene. More information had come through, that it was two bodies, not one.

Once he stepped out of the car and walked up to the front door, looking at the name of the building etched into stone. He swallowed, already picking up on the scent of death and decay that was coming from inside. A quick look behind showed him Jack and Beverly, Price and Zeller waiting by the patrol cars, gear in their hands and ready to move.

"We haven't got all day!" Zeller called out, hands on his hips impatiently waiting for Will to do his job and get out of the way. Bev punched him in the arm and shot a dark look at him while Price muttered something.

Cringing slightly, Will pressed forward and walked into the old building. The hinges of the door creaked, a thud as it hit the wall and light spilled into the hallway. At the end of it, there was one body clearly visible already. He moved slowly, listening to his footsteps echo in the hall along with something dripping.

As he approached the bodies, he understood where the dripping noise was coming from and he had to look away for a second to regain his composure before he looked again.

Both of the victims were male, the alpha seemed to have suffered the least of the punishment of the two. The omega however, all of the Executioner's rage had been used for it. Will could

instantly tell when he looked, knowing their biology from what was exposed in the omega's body that was sawn in half.

Swallowing, he took it in before closing his eyes and starting from the beginning.

Both my victims are tied, I don't want them to escape the fate I have chosen specifically for them. I want to show the Ripper how well I can rip apart his perfect mate, because I am the only one he needs.

A shiver runs through Will, feeling the brutality of the killer envelope him like a wet blanket, the rage he has for this omega before him now that is a proxy for him. This is a scene that took some preparation, days of work in crafting as Will looks at the contraptions that have been built. The well designed coffin cage that the alpha on the floor is locked inside of, eyes glancing over to the bolts that are in the floor and on the ceiling, chains attached to them that connect to each of the omega's limbs. He can feel the ghost sensation of them on his own almost, making his skin tingle unpleasantly.

The chains that hold the omega in place are spaced wide enough to allow a tub underneath. One that has been used to catch the blood and viscera that has fallen from the male omega's body. What makes Will's stomach churn is the alpha who is locked in the coffin cage, the one that has been set up to make him lay face down in the very tub that his mate's blood has spilled into, effectively filling slowly and drowning him.

Will could almost dry retch as he looks away, takes a deep breath and gathers himself. There is so much rage in the scene he feels as though it is choking him. Eyes turn back to the metal work on the cage, seeing the welding marks on the steel, this is hand made, most likely by the Executioner, giving another hint at just how skilled the man is.

The omega has been alive while he was killed, a brutal form of death being dealt to him when the Executioner sawed him in half down the middle. Both arms and legs is chained so the omega's body is spread open, exposed and vulnerable. Unable to escape his fate, head down to keep the omega conscious as long as possible.

The saw had been driven midsagitally, straight down the center of the body starting at the perineum, the blood that had then poured from the body fell into a tub, though some had sprayed around as the omega thrashed before going limp. Will could see the lines on the body, the point to where the saw reached before the omega stopped thrashing, how the cut became easier and faster. The saw lines smoother, less chunks of flesh falling off the body.

While he could say the alpha got off easier, it wasn't exactly true. Though his body remained intact, restrained by the cage, the blood that fell from his omega partner entered a tub to which his face was laying down in. Unable to move or escape, he had drowned in the blood of his mate, knowing there was nothing he could do to save either of them. Listening to his mate die, just above him.

Will could see it clearly, the saw in his hand as he cut, pushing and pulling the blade through the omega, watching blood fly off the body. As a drop flicked off, onto his face, he paused, bringing his hand up to touch, feeling the hot wet liquid as he drew his finger back and looked at it.

The blood felt hot on his skin, burning him as it spread up his arm and started to reach the rest of his body quickly. A fire within him flaring as he started to sweat, breath coming a bit faster as his heart started to race.

Then he blinked.

Hannibal was above him, looking down on him as his hair flopped in front of his eyes, a hand held Will's wrists above his head, his own legs up and wrapped around Hannibal's waist pulling the alpha in as hips pumped forcefully. Will could feel it then, Hannibal's cock inside of him, the knot expanding as he felt it jerk inside of him. Then stillness, as realisation dawned on Will what was happening as he felt Hannibal coming inside of him and the knot locking them together.

The scream that left Will's mouth to start with was one of pure pleasure, crying out Hannibal's name as he closed his eyes, back arching in delight as his head tilted back and his neck became exposed. Will was moaning, trying to piece together what was happening still when he felt the sharp pain of teeth over his collar bone. A mating bite, a claim on his skin that he belonged to an alpha. That he was Hannibal's, they were mating.

There was a brief moment where Will wanted to protest at the fact Hannibal was now his alpha, died when Hannibal rocked his hips and tested the knot to find it loose enough to move. As Hannibal did, it made Will whine, skin itching as an unbearable wave of heat started to wash over him. The rational part of his mind that was screaming was quieted by his omega side that yearned for this contact, the one that wanted Hannibal to continue rutting into him, breeding him.

Starting to pump his hips again, Hannibal held Will as he felt his knot expanding, his orgasm already starting to build to accommodate for his new omega mate's needs. As Will clawed his arms, trying to hold Hannibal while he moaned, Hannibal leant down to whisper in Will's ear. "You are all mine now Will, and I assure you that I take excellent care of my possessions."

Will barely heard what Hannibal had said, eyes rolling back as he came. Muscles milking Hannibal's knot for everything it gave him as Hannibal stilled inside of him as deep as he could go, lips pressing over the newly broken skin from before, possessively claiming him again.

The last conscious thought Will has before his mind slips into the daze of heat is that he is Hannibal's mate now. He is not sure if that is a good thing or a bad thing. Hannibal will be his, forever.

Chapter End Notes

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Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

> I'm sorry for the delay guys, it was difficult to get this chapter written, like just unbelievable for me! BUT I did it, and I've already started on the next, I don't know if it will end as simply as I had thought it would, but things are changing for Will and getting hairy!

Will felt tired as he woke, his body aching as he opened his eyes and stared at the pillow before he felt the press of lips to the back of his neck, the moist warm breath against his skin, a shiver of pleasure and fear running down his spine as memories surfaced of what Will had been doing.

He was quick, turning over as he opened the palm of his hand and let it connect with Hannibal's cheek. The resounding slap filling the silence in the room as Will exhaled. Sitting up as he watched Hannibal's cheek redden and a charmed look appear upon his face. Eyes butterscotch soft as they looked into Will's with no remorse for what had occurred.

"I never wanted this." Breathed Will, glaring. "You knew that, that I was uncomfortable with this."

"I'm a slave to my own biology as you are to yours," Hannibal spoke, tone to calm as he sat and looked at Will, leaving space between them now. "When I found you on the front doorstep, you triggered a rut, your kiss made my defenses crumble."

For a brief second Will looked shocked, long enough for Hannibal to see it. "You do not remember… Another moment of losing time?" Even though Hannibal knew it was a reaction to both heat and illness, the moment he had found Will was somewhat unexpected, but with the omega so deep into his heat and primal urges overruling his body, Will was a bundle of wanton desire eager to mount his alpha that he had been drawn to for so long.

"I was at the scene, I blinked, then I woke up to you..." Will grated out, feeling raw and unnerved. His head dropped into his hands, a feeling of insanity settling over him and making his heartbeat rise. "I didn't think it was real." Yet the dull ache that was on his collar bone from the mating bite told him just how wrong he was. The slick he could still feel between his legs along with no doubt what was some of Hannibal too. Cheeks flushed, his cock stirred as a few moans of pleasure could be heard in his mind, he remembered the orgasms and how good it had felt.

"Will,"

Hannibal reached out, trying to calm Will, hand searching but unable to make contact as Will turned his head away and denied him. An obvious show at trying to be independent, to not allow his biological impulses to overrule his logical brain.

“Please, don’t.” Will fixed him with a look as he stood, looking for clothes as he started to get dressed while creating more space and distance. “I need time.” Staying in the house with Hannibal was not an option, he wanted space, to stop the yearning he already felt for the alpha’s touch, for a kiss.

“Your heat was short, more triggered as a survival mechanism. I’m curious as to what you saw that may have triggered it.” A gentle nudge to hear Will’s thought’s on the scene, what it had stirred within him. There was annoyance at the Executioner, the killer had to be able to trigger Will’s heat. Was it truly terrifying, or had Will been overcome with the beauty in this amatuer killer’s work?

“The executioner wants to kill the Ripper’s omega, that is what this has been about. He wants to show him how good he could be for him, and anyone who gets in his way will die at his hands.” Will spoke, remembering the scene and all the bodies the Executioner had left in his wake. The fascination that the Ripper had with him and that made the Executioner act out, but not jealousy, more rage. “There is no elegance to their suffering, only his desire to have what he wants, but the Executioner will never understand that the Ripper will always deny him.”

Reaching out, Hannibal took Will’s hand, caressing it between his own. The touch was gentle, one that made Will look down as Hannibal held his between his own. “I would never let anything happen to you.” Hannibal spoke, holding his gaze.

Will could see the sincerity in his words, the truth spoken. An understanding of why it had shaken Will and caused such a reaction. He was the focus of the Executioner’s rage, the love the Ripper had. An unknown one, with him being mated now to Hannibal how would it change. Would the Ripper turn and send him the same messages?

Soft cries could be heard, alerting them from the conversation and topic, and Will was thankful to have the excuse to leave. Pulling on a shirt and pants, he went to see Eros, picking the boy up as he held him close and was thankful for the joy and happiness he brought into his life, how he made him smile then despite everything. It was the fact that Eros needed him and depended on him, nothing untoward about it. Pure and simple. Why couldn't everything be this simple.

“We’re leaving for a few days,” Will announced, already making plans to return to Wolf Trap and spend time alone, to see someone about his loss of time. “I need space, Hannibal.” The words came out harsh, a plead to them for time apart to sort out his own feelings without having biology get in the way.

“Nothing I say will persuade you otherwise,” Hannibal spoke, already making his own plans. This matter was one Will had to come to terms with on his own, not by his hand. Though he would certainly nudge Will. “Would you allow me to say goodbye while you pack?”

Reaching out, Will reluctantly gave Eros up, allowing Hannibal to hold him as he moved about the room and packed what he needed. Every so often looking to the pair and feeling his stomach twist as he watched Hannibal smile and Eros laugh.

It didn't take long for Will to pack the car, letting Zoe sit in the front seat while Winston waited in the back.

Coming back, he watched Hannibal kiss the boy before handing him over. "I'll try and work something out, just..." Not knowing how to finish, he paused, thankful when Hannibal seemed to understand.

"When you are ready, unless you sooner is required."

Will paused, looking at Hannibal as he gave him a small smile, a silent thank you for understanding in some strange way. This was something that had always haunted him slightly however, introducing an alpha to Eros to only take him away from it. For that he felt guilt at ruining his son's chance, but just maybe he wouldn't. For now however, he got into the car and made his way to Wolf Trap, welcoming the following few days of solitude and time spent with his son and dogs.

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The drive back felt longer than it was, Will's own mind recalling some of the events of his short heat from the previous hours. Small blessing's that it had only lasted a day and night. Even as he tried to concentrate, his mind betrayed him.

Hannibal's hips slowly rocking into his own as he whined and gripped onto the alpha, pulling him in closer as he bared his neck while tilting his pelvis to better feel the knot expanding inside of him. His low groan of pleasure when Hannibal came and his own body milked him for every last drop of the alpha's seed.

Pulling into the driveway, Will was somewhat ashamed that he was wet again, an erection tenting his pants as he breathed deeply. He could still smell Hannibal scent on him. Naturally, he brought his arms up to hug himself, trying to calm the tension he felt. Yet his body longed for Hannibal's embrace, the alpha's body lying over his own, again. The heavy weight that signified protection and safety, how Hannibal spooned him and kissed the back of his neck gently.

"Shit!" His hand thumped on the steering wheel waking Eros. Will regretted it as he got out of the car and went to see him, picking him up and apologising to him as the boy calmed quickly.

Stepping into the house, Will immediately decided to call Jack, then Alana. Alana being more concerned with Will's own well being but happy to take over his classes until he returned, Jack was not as enthused.

"You can still send me updates, I can look at the pictures."

There was a sigh on the phone. “You said you needed to see the scenes, now you're happy with pictures?” asked Jack. “What is going on Will?”

“Nothing, I’m just..”

“Have I pushed you too far?” Jack had suddenly asked. “Did I break you?”

Something clawed at the back of Will’s throat, annoyance or anger. Whatever it was burned as he felt like he was being treated like he was fragile or special. “I’m fine, Jack. It’s just a fever.” There wasn’t really a lie there, he was running hotter than usual, had been for some time. Perhaps the cold had got to him and with the workload and stress he just needed to relax, a few days at home and sleeping, no outside stressors, he would be good again.

Away from Hannibal and his own biological urges to find him and fuck him again too. That would be a great benefit, while helping him to see clearer.

As he decided to clean the house and play with Eros, watching his son try to speak more words and babble happily, he felt his heart melt. It became more difficult when the boy whined as he was put down for a nap, likely expecting his papa to be there. It was what he had wanted to avoid, before when he had been alone. He didn’t want Eros to have a family and take it away.

Finally with Eros going to sleep, Will went downstairs, fixing himself a whiskey despite it only being early afternoon. He drained the first two fingers of it before he poured another, looking out the window as the dogs sat quietly on the floor staring at him.

“What?”

Winston walked forward, plopping his head in Will’s lap and letting him pet him. “I suppose your going to say that I over reacted?”

There was no response, only a nudge for Will to keep petting Winston’s head. He sighed and did so, looking back outside. The day couldn’t pass quick enough, he just wanted everything to settle, how he longed for what he had before while missing what he had just left behind.

As the end of the day came, Will managed to get Eros to eat before he put him down, reading him a story. Hoping that the boy would sleep through the night, though if he woke he would not be surprised. He wondered if he would sleep himself, what nightmares were awaiting him.

As he finished the story, he watched Eros’s chest rise and fall slowly. It hit him then he could have stayed at Hannibal’s, fingers rising to the mark on his collarbone as he touched it gently and felt a shiver run down his back. One of delight as his hole throbbed slightly.

He missed Hannibal, Will wanted him back here and now to tell him it was going to be fine. Still, he had pushed away and ran as he had the first time he met Hannibal. Having deemed himself unsuitable, too much of a hassle. Easier to be left alone than for someone to try and love him.

It's why he had never been sociable, he hated trying to fit in when he didn't feel like he did in anyway. Hannibal was a social person, fancy parties and dinners that he attended as well as the opera and other social events that would make Will ill. Happy to please those around where as he felt the opposite. How had they even been attracted to each other in the first place?

Walking back downstairs, Will made his way back to the whiskey and poured another glass, looking at the bottle that was slowly draining away and wondering how much he had already had this day alone.

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The room still smelt of heat and sex as Hannibal walked back in, a primal instinct rose in him to roll on the sheets and soak up what was left of the few hours he had shared with Will. Such things were unsavory, and to be frank, he would rather have Will there to indulge in instead of second hand scents.

Still, as he picked up Will's old shirt, he brought it to his nose and indulged himself. "That was rude, Will… What is to be done about that?" Spoken to himself as he opened the windows and cleaned. Knowing all the while he was being watched.

After he finished, he packed his plastic suit into a case, taking it to his car as he took what tools he needed and wanted. Afterwards he returned to his kitchen, preparing a marinade for the organs he would be returning with. He had been looking forward to this moment for weeks, and now that he and Will were bonded, he knew the Executioner would strike. Trying to take what Hannibal desired most. He was a step ahead of him though, orchestrating all the events, the bodies. Even Will's heat.

The cocktail of drugs and illness in WIll's system made it easy for a heat to strike, the loss of time assisted and Will's unconscious episodes had him seeking Hannibal desiring so much more.

The only thing left to do now was to make Will completely his, to give him leverage to keep him close and to have him return. Despite it being a slow road, Hannibal had enjoyed the twists and turns, the performances of all the puppets who had no idea.

Will was the prize for him at the end. He was looking forward to hearing sweet words drip from his lips, soft pleading eyes that begged for help as he gave Will his hand to assist him.

The omega would not be aware he had been the Ripper all along until afterwards. Sure that Will would join him in killing eventually.

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Alana hang up the phone after she spoke to Will, a feeling crawling under her skin of just how different he sounded, almost panicked. Instead of confronting Will about it,she wanted to go and rage at Jack, to tell him to stop pushing the poor man. She could start to see cracks appearing in Will and concern was growing in her.

“What has you scowling?” Margot asked, leaning over to kiss her neck, hand gently sliding down her body.

“Will, he’s sick.”

It made Margot raise an eyebrow. “That is not all you’re thinking, though.”

“No,” Alana admitted, moving closer to Margot now as she kissed her gently. “I’m still thinking on what you have been talking about. How to get away from your brother, are you sure it would work? Having an heir?”

For a second Margot looked away, distant as her hand came to her back, touching a scar covered by her blouse. “It’s the only way. When he finds out about you, he will try to remove you. I know what he is capable of, and I know he enjoys suffering and pain. He will find a way to use you to inflict it on me.”

“I’m just not sure on how you are going to achieve this, while I’m prepared to go through the process to change my own body chemistry, your still sterile.” Alana hung her head, knowing it was a painful subject.

“With the number of contacts my family has, it’s not too difficult. For now it is more about us staying safe more than anything else.” Margot gave a weak smile. “I may know someone who could help, the one who saw through the will and may have ideas about how to remove my brother.”

Alana fixed Margot with a look, one that silently said to not tell her anymore about what she was planning. She knew murder when she heard it, while she loved Margot, she wasn’t sure about how the woman was ever going to escape her brother. Instead she had been trying to get Margot to run with her, to leave the country and live somewhere else. Yet Mason had put a stop to it, Alana didn’t know how, but she didn’t doubt force was used.

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Sleep did not come for Will, the only pleasant thing about the night before was that Eros did not wake. How Will wished he could sleep so easily and peacefully, no nightmares or monsters to keep you awake. Nevertheless, he started the day with his coffee, the strong scent waking his tired senses as he sipped on the hot brew. It had only been half an hour before a knock came on the door, making Will jump in surprise as he went to answer having not been expecting anyone.

A view out the window of the door showed the renovator that had come to Hannibal’s place, the man waving at him. Will paused, thinking Hannibal may have sent the man over, then Hannibal would have asked him, surely.

“Wasn’t expecting anyone.” Will spoke, opening the door, looking behind Dan to try and find his car. Considering he had not heard it in the driveway or the dogs even bark, it was unusual. As he looked into Dan’s eyes though, he felt the hair stand on the back of his neck, a sinking feeling settling in his stomach as he went to take a step back.

Dan is quick though, opening the door and using it to hit Will in the face before he grabs him by his shirt, turning him as he slams him into a wall and lets Will's head bounce against it as stars burst in front of his eyes.

"I knew you weren't expecting anyone." Dan whispers as he leans in, a snarl to his voice as he scents Will. A hand pulling at the shirt to reveal the bonding mark. "Trying to run and hide, but you can't escape me."

With ease, Will is thrown to the floor, hitting it hard as Dan steps behind him and puts a foot on his back, kneeling down as he starts to bind his wrists. "But I'll show him, put his puppet up on a string, where he is unable to play with you anymore."

The rope that binds Will's wrists is tight, digging into the flesh and burning as it starts to leave marks. Tilting his head up, Will turns to look at Dan. "How did you know?" Curious as to what the man had done to find out people's schedules, despite knowing he is trying to distract and buy time, he is also genuinely interested. Hopefully Dan will indulge him, let his guard down enough that Will can make a move. The police trained him for situations like this years ago, and he remembers that training vividly now.

"Smoke detectors, every home needs one." Dan smirks, tugging on the rope for good measure to make sure it is tight enough as he stares down now at Will. "No one see's the hidden camera inside of it. The one that is linked easily to your wi-fi and can be accessed online."

"Do you enjoy sitting there, watching?" The question held a note of arrogance with hint of sarcasm. "Couldn't get what you wanted, so just watched everyone else and jerked off?" It was aimed to hurt, to make Dan reckless, Will had studied his kills long enough. He wouldn't even give him the pleasure of being called by the name he had been given in the papers. Hopefully, Will was right, as if he played this wrong, there was going to be hell to pay.

Sure enough, Dan pulled him up, turning him to look at him as he glared at him. Hand coming to Will's throat as he grabbed. "It was never like that." Fingers dug into soft skin, deep enough to bruise and cut air off until they relaxed slightly.

"So what was it then? A bid for attention… They're going to have so much fun dissecting you in jail." A sneer on Will's lips as his eyes watered and narrowed. Glad that he was getting Dan to talk, to let his guard down as Will struggled with the ropes to try and free his hands.

The ropes started to give as Dan fought with himself, Will could read the mix of sadistic pleasure and desire to simply kill Will now. But it would be drawn out, Will knew Dan, the Executioner would want the Ripper's attention, perhaps even leaving him clues to goad him over into a trap.

Will's moment came when Dan let out a growl, giving him a moment to act. Legs came up quick, kicking Dan in the gut, making him winded as he fell back and Will lept to his feet, untying the ropes on his wrists as he started to head to his bedroom trying to get his gun. He was halfway up the stairs when Dan threw something that hit Will square in the back, making him falter in his stride, giving Dan time to catch up.

“I’m going to rip your arms off for that, bitch!” Dan roared, grabbing Will as he slammed him into the wall again. “Shove them down your throat you no-good omega whore!”

Breathing heavily, Will looked into Dan’s eyes, the Executioner who had promised to come and kill him. He could read them, see his plan laid out for him, what he was going to do, and fear crept in for what would happen to Eros, but Hannibal as well. Would he kill his alpha? His son?

Dan was drawing it back now, knuckles turning white already from the strain he was putting into it as his arm went back further than necessary, rage guiding him. As his heart picked up, panting as he waited for a blow, he closed his eyes and waiting for the fist to connect to his jaw.

Silence followed.

Nothing happened, and then Will realised he was on his back. In his own bed covered in sweat and panting. Throwing back the sheets, he saw blood on his hands, mud on his feet. STunned, he stared at it, unable to place why he was covered in both. Had it been a nightmare, did he hurt himself or… Did he kill someone?

Heart still thumping in his chest, Will got up, walking around the house, finding Eros still asleep and that he had lost seven hours. Was it all real? What was happening to him. This was not simply a part of his heat.

Nothing was adding up, even the dogs seemed unperturbed. Setting foot into the kitchen, Will paused, looking at the trail of blood that was on the floor, the arterial spray up the walls and the bloodied knife that was left on the table. He followed the trail of blood, walking outside to where he saw the body of Dan. The Executioner.

He was mounted on a tree, sticks and knives stuck into his body like the wound man and antlers adorning his head, coated in blood. His eyes open, as well as his abdominal cavity, a grotesque display of beauty with organs missing.

Slowly, he staggers forward. Eyes wide with horror and adoration, it had not been a dream, that was for certain. Thougyh, Will found himself relieved, the Executioner was gone from his life. Looking down at his own hands, Will had to stop, guessing from his state, he had killed the Executioner. But what evidence would they have on Dan that could prove it?

“Will?”

Turning, he stared at Hannibal standing in the backdoor and looking out. Mouth falling open, there was no doubt what this looked like, what Hannibal would think. “He attacked me,” Spoken quickly, trying to convey the truth to Hannibal and hoping, praying the alpha would listen. Looking into maroon eyes, he hoped that Hannibal would see the truth. He knew of his fear, the messages the Executioner had sent him. The threats.

“Is that your blood?” Hannibal asked, eyes on Will instead of the body of the Executioner. There was a note of concern with almost professional detachment.

Looking down at his hands, the blood he doubted was his own. He couldn't remember even hurting anyone, bile rose in his throat, the urge to be sick at what he could have done. It wasn't him, but at the same time a small part of him was relieved that the man was dead and revelled in possibly killing him himself. Considering how he had threatened him. "It's not my blood, I… I don't know what happened. I was attacked."

"You were defending yourself?" Hannibal spoke, stepping forward, hand reaching out to touch Will's cheek. "This does not look like self defense." Moving forward past Will, Hannibal looked at the body, secretly admiring his own work and the display he had created for his mate who had been threatened by this man. "This wasn't reckless violence. A controlled use of force." A pause as he turned and looked at Will. "You were not defending yourself, Will."

"He knew where I lived, he knew us, was watching us!" Will blurted out. "I didn't kill him!"

As Will fell to his knees, he missed the smile that graced Hannibal's lips for a second before it was tucked away. The alpha walking across to him as he took off his coat and draped it over Will's shoulders. " I can help you tell the version of events you want to be told… I can help you if you ask me to." Voice soft, waiting. The gentle touch of his hand on WIll's back as he leant in and smelt the mix of fear and hope. His own scent still present, just.

Gripping onto the coat as Will's body shook from the cold and the shock, he looked back up. He knew what this appeared like, that his prints were likely on the knife. If he called the cops, they would send the FBI to investigate when they found out who he was, they would take him away, or Eros. There was a chance he could be locked up. "Please," Looking up at Hannibal now, his offer to help, he was ready to beg and ask, to accept Hannibal and this gracious gesture to help him. "Please, help me, Hannibal."

Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

> There is a twist to this story, a new tag to be added. If you are uncomfortable with non-consensual medical practices, abortion, artificial insemination, please skip over this chapter or only read the last part.
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> It is part of the story and Hannibal has done something to ensure his freedom and *cough* innocence

The body of the Executioner is buried deep in the woods outside his home, unlikely to be discovered with the rocks placed over the top of the grave and with the colder weather coming, unlikely to be discovered anytime soon. Wolf Trap had always been a good place to hide a body, no one around for miles. Quiet and peaceful.

Afterwards Will had come inside, taking a shower as Hannibal had suggested while he cleaned and looked after Eros. Will could only guess that is what he had done, considering he had heard the boy cry briefly before he went quiet again. It is when he dressed and returned downstairs, seeing the house cleaner, Hannibal having a first aid kit open on the kitchen table, waiting for Will's return.

His feet had carried him over to the chair, and he sat, staring out the window as he watched clouds pass. His mind felt numb, his body ached. Hannibal's touch was so gentle, treating his wounds with care.

Hannibal wrung a cloth out in the warm water, bringing it to the wound on Will's arm. The puncture mark of a knife that was to hide the needle he had used earlier to render Will unconscious when he had arrived. Though Will was half dazed from the concussion he had sustained at the hands of the Executioner he could not risk Will seeing or recalling any events.

As he cleaned Will's wounds, Hannibal watched Will struggling to come to terms with what had happened. Lost in his own thoughts most likely. How Hannibal desired in that moment to peek into his mind and to see the events Will was likely creating to explain the situation. Not having Will's attention in the moment however was not acceptable. He wanted to hear what Will thought, to listen to the confessions that could fall from his creation.

In essence, with Will stopping and being lost in his own thoughts, Hannibal considered it to be like a caterpillar. Will has essentially finished consuming what Hannibal has provided, his whole world turning upside down as Will now retreated inside, will spin his own chrysalis for Hannibal to whisper through until the moment he figures it out and he will hatch. A creature Hannibal will not entirely be able to predict but one that he has been eager to meet.

“Don’t go inside.” Spoken softly as he places the bandage over the knife wound, Will not even lifting his gaze.

“Where else would I go?” asks Will, not knowing what Hannibal wants him to do in this moment.

“You’ll want to retreat, to pull away… I would rather you stay here, with me.”

It made Will swallow a lump in his throat, looking up as his eyes locked with Hannibal, a silent thank you for everything the man had done all that he had risked in helping Will. How had he been so lucky to find Hannibal. “I’d like to go home.”

Maroon eyes lowered, a nod of understanding what home meant. “We will, soon.”

Staying true to his word, Hannibal took Will and Eros with the dogs back to Baltimore. Parking the Bentley in the garage as he took Eros from the car seat. Will absently left the car and headed upstairs without looking at them. To Will, everything still felt surreal, perhaps it was a dream that he could not wake from.

The day was not over for Hannibal though, entertaining Eros as he made something for Will to eat. Hidden away in the car was a cooler which contained the organs Hannibal had removed. It had been easy to cut them from the body, so much pleasure was given to him as he finally put the Executioner in his proper place, his food chain.

It was with a deep regret that Hannibal had not had the time available to take the brain from the Executioner, but the liver and heart would be used as best he could. The spleen and kidneys had been taken to make up for the loss of the brain. At the time of killing the Executioner, staging the scene, he had not accounted for how quick WIll’s body would burn through the drugs. The omega’s unexpected heat still causing havoc to the chemical balance of the body, burning through things quicker than normal.

Placing Eros in his highchair, Hannibal hummed as he took what he needed and laid the heart on the chopping board. Taking a knife, he carefully diced the organ before finely slicing the heart. Humming as he cut, the heart was made it into strips before being added to a pan and lightly seared. Hannibal wanting Will to experience the heart in all it’s goodness it was done to medium-rare, crusty on the outside and tender in the middle. Once it was finished, he set it to the side and let it sit in the juices while he prepared a few leaves of lettuce and tomatoes. An easy simple meal to his own standards.

Plating the meal, he put it on a tray as he made a bottle for Eros. Leaving it sit while he got a wine glass, he left Eros sitting in the kitchen as he went through to his study, opening a draw and taking out one of the sleeping pills. It was taken back to the kitchen, crushed up and put into the wine glass before Hannibal added shiraz and mixed it through. With the rich scent and flavour of the shiraz, it would be impossible to detect. It was added to the tray, along with the bottle for Eros.

Carefully, Hannibal took Eros and the tray upstairs, entering the master bedroom to find Will laying down.

“You should eat,” Hannibal spoke quietly, placing the tray down on the night stand as he took the bottle for Eros. “You need something in your system.”

Sitting up slowly, Will looked at the food, eyes passing it to the glass of red that accompanied it. Thinking that the alcohol was a better option, he reached for it and drank half in one go. “How were you so calm?” The glass was placed back on the tray as WIll looked at Hannibal, watching him come to sit by his side on the bed with Eros.

“It is not the first time I have seen a body, nor that amount of blood. Having worked in the Emergency room before I suppose desensitized me to certain situations.” Hannibal spoke, brushing back Eros’s dark hair. “More importantly, you were afraid, it would be reckless on my part as your mate to leave you there.”

“But I left you here,” Looking down at his own hands, he felt his heart in his throat, a stir of butterflies in his belly. “While it hurt, you didn’t hesitate to come… To help me. Why?”

“One does not have control to whom they fall in love with,” Hannibal answered, touching Will’s shoulder, drawing him closer. “You deserve more than what you believe... It is so bad to be loved by someone?”

“There is a darkness to me that is not capable of being loved.” Will replied, thinking of the Ripper and how well at times they could fit together. How the bodies left behind by him made something inside of Will so pleased. A love that didn’t need words. A love he could easily understand. Yet Hannibal was also such a significant part of his life now, where would he be without him. “It feels like you only have half of my heart. The rest has been consumed.”

Turning away, Will wanted to apologize to Hannibal. The alpha who gave him his heart on a silver platter to consume fully could not have the same done in return.

“To the Ripper.” Hannibal spoke, already knowing the truth, simply waiting for Will to catch up. “Normally in tales where the heart is devoured, it ends in tragedy.”

“The only question that remains is if it consumed raw or cooked.”

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Will woke early in the morning, rolling over in the bed to feel Hannibal sleeping next to him. Lazily, he let his hand roam over the alpha’s chest, fingers combing through hair before they settled on Hannibal’s belly. He could feel Hannibal breathing deeply, stirring awake as Hannibal turned ever so slightly and a hand was placed over Will’s own. Slowly, Will came closer to spoon Hannibal from behind, enjoying the closer contact.

For a few minutes they stayed like that, until Hannibal decided to move. Turning to face Will as he looked into his eyes, not speaking. Instead, Will decided to make the first move. Leaning forward as he kissed Hannibal slowly, passionately. It was sensual, the soft working of lips against each other, feeling Hannibal easily meet him and accept anything he wanted to give. Already letting his legs move to entwine with Hannibal, feeling that wonderful spark of electricity between them tingling through his body, making him wet and wanton.

A hand ran down Will's back, grabbing his ass and pulling him up closer. A single finger sliding between his cheeks that made Will push back onto it as he let out a breath, tilting his head up and trying to silently convey his approval and desire. The moment the digit slipped inside of him, Will locked eyes with Hannibal before kissing him again.

As the one finger eventually became three, Will was trying to stifle his moans. Hannibal shifting to have Will sit on top of him as he scissored him, finally taking his fingers away and letting WIll guide himself onto his cock. Hands came to hold Will's hips as he thrust up, eyes never leaving Will's face, watching the changing expressions with every movement.

It ended in Hannibal being held down as Will rode him, finally coming to sit on him as Hannibal came, Will milking it and taking it as he groaned on top of him. Basking in the moment of pure exhilaration, Hannibal loving every second of it. Even as he pulled Will down to hold him against his chest and spoon him, lazily kissing him as Will laid there basking in the afterglow. Neither of them regretting it for a minute.

It wasn't just heat induced sex, it was more than that. Even with what Will had spoken of the night before, Hannibal still had half of his heart, yet somehow in that moment, it seemed like he held it entirely whole.

The doorbell broke the moment, making Hannibal sigh as he whispered. "The last time I was woken this early, it was a census taker." Both were blissfully ignoring the first ring, but the second and third made Hannibal move.

Pulling on a sweater and pants, Hannibal made his way to the door, opening it to find Jack Crawford standing there looking at him. "Good morning, Dr. Lecter… May I come in?"

"Of course, Jack. What can I do or you?" Hannibal opened the door wider, letting the agent in, not missing the use of his title and the hard look in Jack's eye.

"Miriam Lass has been found." Jack spoke, eyes not leaving Hannibal, watching his every move, studying. "Alive."

"Quite the miracle,"

"Yes," Jack stepped forward, turning his gaze from Hannibal to the surrounds of the house. The vase of flowers that sat at one end held Jack's attention before he spoke again. "May I ask your whereabouts yesterday?"

"We spent the day in Wolf Trap, Jack." Will spoke, appearing in the doorway of the foyer. Arms crossed as he had Hannibal's shirt on, barely covering his underwear. Curls stuck up at odd angles, showing exactly where Will had been with Hannibal moments before they had been interrupted. He knew that tone of Jack's, watching the man treat his partner like a suspect. "We took Eros for a walk with the dogs."

"Is this true, Dr. Lecter?" Jack stared at Will, he could see the mark on Will's collar bone, the bite that signified a bonding. There was a slight shock, he did not think Will to be the type to bond or to find him there. Yet with the pair already having a child and spending time together again, perhaps it had been inevitable. The bite mark was fresh, the scent of Will's stronger

than normal, a realisation as to why Will had asked for sick leave. Jack figured with the pair bonding, it was unlikely Hannibal would have committed a crime seeing as the evidence on Will presented a plausible alibi. Finally, he looked at Hannibal again.

“Yes, as I’m sure you’re aware now, Will and I bonded. May I ask as to why you wanted to know my whereabouts?” Hannibal pressed, though he already knew exactly why, he had simply cemented his alibi in that moment with Will confirming to Jack Hannibal had been with him.

“When we found Miriam Lass, or she found us. Lead us back to where she was being held for whoever long by the Ripper. We found a fingerprint belonging to you. There is still evidence being processed.” Jack had wanted to come and see for himself, to confront who he believed to be a fellow colleague and confront him about what had been discovered. Yet this could still be a game to the Ripper.

“If Miriam is alive, the Ripper intended her to be found like that. For a long time, we have believed her all to be dead. Why would he keep her alive?” Will spoke, stepping forward, closer to Hannibal.

“That is something we are still trying to determine.” Jack let out a sigh. “She is pregnant.”

It made Will tilt his head, this was not something he had ever expected of the Ripper. “Pregnant?” he repeated. “Jack, his scenes have been about creating death and destruction, beauty in the decay. Nothing about creating life or sustaining it.”

“That is not exactly true, Will.” Jack looked at him, Will knowing he was referring to the scenes that had been left for him. “As you said yourself, he was changing. He found someone. You believed it to be yourself, but it may have been Miriam, considering she saw him. Perhaps she used it to build his trust to enable her escape.”

“If that is so, the Ripper may have planned her escape, her rescue. The Ripper may be trying to frame Hannibal for his crimes.” Will spoke.

“That is what I believe, now.” Jack gave a nod, eyes meeting Hannibal’s again. “We’ll need you to come in, provide a statement. Just procedural.”

“Of course,” a single nod from Hannibal. “It is fortunate she was able to survive for as long as she has.”

“Yes, at the moment we have had to call in outside assistance for the case. Dr. Bloom is speaking with her and trying to establish what happened.” Taking his leave, Jack headed to the door. “I’m sorry for disturbing you.”

“No problem at all, Jack. Anything we can do to help.” Hannibal spoke, holding the door open for the man. He closed it when he left, turning to look at Will who was frowning.

“I should really go and help,” Will sighed, a mixture of hope and relief for Jack and Miriam, glad the woman was still alive after all this time. At what cost however?

Hannibal gave a warm smile, the plan going smoothly thus far. “Of course, I should be able to look after Eros while I finish some work at home, considering I don’t have to go into the office today.”

Stepping closer, Will kissed Hannibal on the lips, staying longer than was needed. “I really enjoyed this morning, despite the interruption.” Feeling Hannibal hum in approval of his words, Will pulled back. “I’ll go see Eros before I leave.”

The playful pat of Will’s ass made him smirk, turning to smirk at Hannibal. Knowing that a repeat of the morning would follow soon. It was pleasant to wake that way, no nightmares, only Hannibal there, keeping him safe in so many ways. He felt clearer, more well rested.

“Hey you,” Will smiled as he found Eros sitting up and reaching for him, picking the boy up and bouncing him gently, enjoying the giggle he got in return. Changing Eros, Will picked out something simple for him to wear before bringing him downstairs. Winston appeared when Will came back downstairs, Zoe already sitting just outside the kitchen watching Hannibal cook.

“Always an audience,” Will smiled as he put Eros in his highchair, taking the cup of coffee Hannibal had made for him.

“Difficult to avoid,” smiled Hannibal taking a saucepan off the stove and pouring the contents into a bowl before passing it to Will. The sweet scent of the apple puree mixed with the coffee in the air.

“No doubt you are still looking forward to when he can eat more variety,” Will took the bowl, grabbing a spoon and bib as he came back to sit near Eros.

“He is seven months now, his diet will be able to handle more variety and I look forward to introducing him to some protein soon.” Moving closer, Hannibal slid an arm around Will’s waist, enjoying how comfortable Will was after the events of the day before, knowing that Will was pushing himself to be more active. A natural reaction to the events that had unfolded.

Instead of asking Will how he was, Hannibal leant in, lips brushing over the omega’s ear as he inhaled Will’s natural scent. “You don’t have to push yourself, we’ll be fine.”

There was a shudder from WIll, turning away slightly before he leant back. “I can’t believe Jack thought of you as being the Ripper... I’m just glad we're safe, with Miriam being found, we might be able to catch him.” Exhaling slowly, Will closed his eyes. “If I did kill the Executioner, I don’t feel guilty.”

“Doing bad things to bad people can make us feel good,” Hannibal murmured gently, hands wrapping around Will and embracing him.

“Is that what you think when you think of the Ripper?” asked Will, curious. The killer who was always in the background of late, entering his life and refusing to leave him in peace until he was possibly in a grave or his bed. A reason why Will was confused about Miriam now. “He must think of himself as God.”

“Killing must feel good to God, too. He does it all the time, and are we not created in his image?”

“Depends on who you ask.” Turning to look Hannibal in the eye.

“God's terrific. He dropped a church roof on 34 of his worshipers last Wednesday night in Texas, while they sang a hymn.” A clipping he had collected with the others over the years, a personal favourite. Hannibal watched Will, wondering when the moment would come.

Will chewed on his lip, asking a question to which he already knew the answer too. “Did God feel good about that?”

Reading Will’s eyes, he could see understanding, despite the question being asked. “He felt powerful.”

A whine alerted Will to Eros’s attempts to try and get the food, hands reaching towards the bowl. “Oh no, you’ll just make a mess.” Scooping up a spoonful of puree, he held it out and helped Eros to eat as Hannibal stayed with him, still holding him. By the time he did have to leave, it was difficult to tear himself away from the moment. A kiss on Eros’s forehead before Hannibal gave him one to remember on his way into Quantico.

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Miriam was sitting in the interview room with Alana, arms crossed defensively over her chest as she absent rocked and shook her head. She was pale, cheeks slightly hollow from lack of body fat, picking up the forensic document Will looked at what she had been discovered in. Jack had allowed her to shower when they had finished, still Will could see the dirt and residue of the dirt she had been found caked in.

“Has she said anything?” Will asked as Jack entered the room. Both of them looking at her and watching Alana enter the interview room.

“She believes she was kidnapped by the Ripper, but she can’t tell us more than that and that he enjoys chamber music.” Jack stood in front of the glass and focused, watching Alana sit, the chair dragging briefly against the floor with a noise that seemed to echo in the small room and over the speakers.

“Do you want anything to eat, Miriam?” Alana asked, her tone careful and polite.

Miriam shook her head, eyes moving to the glass behind Alana as she eyed it wearily.

“Ok,” Shifting in her seat, Alana left her hands on the table, trying to build trust as she approached a sensitive topic. “I’d like to discuss what happened to you. Do you remember anything?”

“He was there, watching…. Sometimes he would talk, like it was hypnotism.” Miriam started, voice shaking as she continued and rocked harder in her seat.

“Quite the unfortunate events,”

The voice felt jarring to Will, turning to look at Frederick Chilton who stood proudly in the room with a visitor badge attached to his jacket. “Frederick… Didn’t realise we were that desperate.”

“Will,” Jack gave him a hard look, silently telling Will to pull his head in. As the younger man looked away, he turned back to Frederick. “Dr. Chilton. Thank you for coming in.”

“As if I was given a choice when you arrived at my house this morning.”

WIll looked at Jack, guessing that Hannibal was not the only one who had evidence linking him. But Chilton, the Ripper. It was enough to make Will want to laugh.

“What do you think, Dr. Chilton?” Jack asked.

“I remember his voice,” Miriam’s voice interrupted them, making them all look into the room. “I couldn’t see his face.”

“How did you escape Miriam?” lana pushed, wanting to get more details.

“I didn’t.”

“He spared you?” frowned Alana, Will also frowning, it didn’t make sense.

“I wasn’t spared… He’s still using me.” Hands fell to her abdomen, a sob being heard as Miriam tried to hold herself together. “He’s the devil! He did this to me!”

“Did he engage in sex with you?” Alana asked, tone light and treading carefully.

“I-I went to sleep, he never touched. Never… There was never anything sexual.”

“So he’s impotent.” Frederick cut in, looking to Jack. “AI has come a long way Jack, and we both know the Ripper has medical knowledge. He may have simply inseminated her.”

“Then why release her?” Will cut in, looking to Frederick. “This wasn’t an escape. The Ripper is playing us again.”

Jack stayed silent, eyes still on Miriam as Frederick spoke. “If you are amenable to the idea Jack, I could conduct a session… Sodium amatol has shown good results before, it may help in this case.”

“I’ll think on it, Dr. Thank you for your time.” Turning back, Jack gave a look that even made Will want to leave the room.

“You can’t seriously be thinking on his offer, Jack.”

“It’s the best option we have, at least until the abortion has been performed.”

Staying silent for a moment, Will eventually sighed, looking back at Jack’s former trainee. “She agreed?”

“She asked the moment we found out.” Jack sighed. “If she was not going to go through we would have fought to have a DNA sample obtained. This is a far easier option, for everyone.”

Will looked into the room, watching Alana reach across the table and hold Miriam’s hand as she cried. He couldn’t blame her, not after all she had been through at the hands of the Ripper.

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“How often have you been losing time?” Bedelia asked, watching Will twitch in his seat, his son in his arms as a comfort and a source to ground him. Her eyes showed concern for Eros’s welfare.

“Too often,” Admitted Will, his heart thumping as he spoke, his own body was still betraying him and screaming out for the touch of Hannibal’s to calm him. One that could not be provided. “I’m not sure what is real anymore.” Eros cooed up at Will, making him look at the boy as he smiled weakly, this had to be real.

Sunlight was coming through the windows, hitting Will in the face and making him avert his eyes from Bedelia when she spoke again.

“You relied on Hannibal for support and a tool to ground you to the present like you are doing with your son. Why did you bring Eros here?”

The clouds in the sky crept over the sun, dimming the light before it started to turn darker. Shadows appearing in the room that grew in size, antlers appearing in the far corner that made Will suck in a breath. “We were on our way home.”

“And where is home Will?” Bedelia asked, leaning forward from her chair, a twisted smile on her lips with eyes that were seeing through him.

Her nostrils flared, breathing in the scent of Hannibal, of the heat Will had just had. Will could see it in her eyes when he caught them briefly, the knowing look and smug intelligence she had. The knowing, she had seen this coming and deep down part of Will had wanted this. Home was with Hannibal and Eros, together as a family. Something he had never had before that he had just run from when it was presented to him.

“You’re afraid because you achieved what you had desired all along without seeing what you were getting into.” Bedelia said, her voice low. “But you know, you just can’t accept it yet.”

Stunned, Will looked at Bedelia, watching her eyes turns from a magnificent blue to maroon, antlers starting to protrude from her skull as her hair started to malt until she was bald, her skin turning black before she stood. Body completely changed and the wendigo, looking directly at him, the one that he had seen at the crime scenes.

Jolting awake, Will breathed heavily as Hannibal rolled over. The bedside light turning on and blinding him as strong arms wrapped around Will and pulled him in.

“Nightmare?” Hannibal’s voice was thick and heavy with sleep.

Will nodded, unable to speak as he calmed himself, heart still thundering in his chest as he felt skin growing cold in the air, only warm where Hannibal held him. Finally, he turned, looking at the man who had changed in his dreams. Wanting to know it was not real.

In the light, Will could see Hannibal's piercing cheekbones, the light tan to his skin. Hair out of place from sleep. He was human, not the beast he had thought he had been in his dreams. Laying back down, the light was switched off and the shadows took over the room. Will stared out into the dark, wondering if the creature from his nightmares was there, even though it still felt like it was close by.

Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will sighed as he sat up in bed, hearing Eros crying through the monitor, again. It was the third night in a row, while his body was tired it felt like his mind was numb. Pulling the sheets back, he felt Hannibal stir beside him.

“I’ve got it,” A yawn left Will as he stretched and grabbed a robe. “Just get some sleep,” He added, hoping the alpha would actually follow his advice. Both of them were tired, still working while trying to soothe their son, Will had to admit he was starting to get cranky, he never took it out on the boy though. It wasn’t his fault. Eros had started teething and while Hannibal had explained it usually passed quickly, the boy seemed determined to set a record.

Winston was already in the room while Eros cried, tail swishing against the floor as he tried to look into the crib. Eros was sitting up, eyes red and puffy as he looked at Will when the light turned on. In seconds he was in Will’s arms, laying against his chest as his cries softened but didn’t die completely.

Falling into a routine, Will rubbed the boy’s back as he sat down and waited for sleep to overtake Eros again, knowing it could be minutes or hours. The way Eros was now starting to chew on his own fist suggested minutes to Will, a light smile as he closed his eyes and leaned back against the chair.

“I’m not sure who I am more pleased to see fall asleep first,” Hannibal spoke kindly from the doorway, hair tousled from sleep, feet strikingly bare.

Cracking an eye open, Will shussed him. “Don’t you start, or I’ll make you sit here again all night.”

“And would you be keeping me company to make sure that I didn’t fall asleep?” Smirked Hannibal. “Perhaps we could bring him to bed with us, it has worked before. It may again.”

All the books Will had read, most had suggested and often spoke of leaving the child in their own room to give them independence and not make them rely on their parents. Will was sure Hannibal had read articles and books now, given how he seemed to be freezing teether toys for the boy and providing him small frozen fruit satchel, things to chew on that would help. The suggestion thougbh to take Eros back to their room made Will feel relief, knowing he could lay down next to Hannibal and listen to Hannibal hum to their son. Something he had caught the other day and he enjoyed. It was rare for Hannibal to use baby talk and Will had not heard him sing until he saw him with Eros. What the boy brought out in them both was amazing and beautiful, touching the boy’s cheek as he wiped tear tracks Will wondered he they created someone capable of this. What a relief it was to have his beautiful boy in his life when he was normally surrounded by death and the worst of humanity, Eros was perfect in his eyes.

Coming to lay back down in the warm bed, Hannibal laid down beside Will as he settled Eros in the middle. Both watching as the boy rolled over and whined pitifully at the pain he was experiencing.

“If I could make it go away my sweet boy, I would.” whispered Hannibal, stroking Eros’s back.

Laying with both his parents seemed to help, and Will watched with relief as Eros quieted and then finally fell asleep.

“His first tooth,” Will mused lazily, looking to Hannibal. “Hopefully he will not be like this when he loses the first.”

“I believe he would be proud, showing it to us and that he is growing.” Letting a finger run along Eros’s cheek, Hannibal smiled at the boy. “He has your stubbornness.”

That made Will laugh, placing a hand over his mouth to muffle it. “What makes you say that?”

“Anything we tried to give him to help, he was insistent in doing it himself or not taking help.”

“To be fair, that medication smelled awful, it couldn’t have tasted any better.” Will kept smiling, remembering the first day and how Hannibal had tried to apply a numbing medication to the boy’s gums. It had resulted in a meltdown and Eros crying for two hours straight until Will came home apparently. While he wasn’t there he could picture it perfectly because he had seen a meltdown before. “I know you put it in those fruit bags though and coated the toys in it.”

Hannibal chuckled. “While I do not wish to manipulate him, some things are for better than worse. He will not understand now, but one day he will. I will always try to be honest to him in the future.”

“To both of us?” Will smiled. “I was on your side you know.” He said, talking about the numbing medication. “Promise to just always be honest with me.” Asked tiredly but smiling, watching Hannibal look after Eros was soothing, bringing forth warm feelings and something he never really had himself.

“I shall, and I always keep my promises, Will.” Hannibal spoke, meaning every word, not just limited to the current situation.

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Stifling a yawn, Will exited the elevator and walked down to the room where Miriam Lass was residing. While Eros finally had his tooth showing through, it seemed another was following and the past few days had just been sleepless nights and Jack grinding him during the day trying to get to the bottom of the Ripper case.

There had been no mention of the Executioner, and while Will still felt anxious about someone finding out, nothing had happened. No one in the FBI was looking at the killer's sudden stop, more expecting a sudden return and awaiting the call to the scene. Only Will knew there would never be one, unless he inspired a copycat.

Approaching the door to the hospital room, he paused when Jack came out with guilt written all over his face. There eyes met and Jack's expression changed as he headed to Will, becoming more focussed on hunting.

"I'm guessing she went through with it." Will said, a mix of emotions running through him at knowing Miriam had terminated the pregnancy. He could understand perfectly well, anyone would really. Even Jack did. It didn't help Will's own thoughts as he knew there was a chance at this current time, so soon after mating with Hannibal he could be pregnant again himself, something he had not wanted to check. Yet with Miriam going through her own experience and Will being involved, the very present reality made him think on his own situation more.

"Katz is waiting at the lab to run the tests, hopefully this son of bitch is on the database. It is the most conclusive evidence we have ever had for the Ripper. One that will hold up in court." Jack sighed at the end, so much was weighing on this and Miriam's testimony.

"You're going to let her face the Ripper when you catch him then," Will could see it, heard it in Jack's words. So much weight was being put onto Miriam's shoulders, he knew how crippling it could be and how damaging it was when Jack relied solely upon someone. He had been on the receiving end so many times. Now Jack's focus had changed, and Will felt somewhat grateful, because if the alpha did lean on him there was a possibility of him finding something out that Will was trying so hard to cover. Him and Hannibal.

"Miriam will have to identify him, but she has asked to do that. Alana said it could be beneficial in her therapy. It could give her the chance at closure."

"So long as your are not considering Chilton's offer." Giving the man a hard eye, having not been part o any of Frederick's therapies, the man was a woeful psychiatrist.

There was a almost roll of eyes from Jack, looking at Will with a harsh tone of 'as if' though not saying it. Shoulders sagged as he let out another sigh. "Everything is resting in Beverly at the minute."

There is the opportunity to comfort Jack, to tell him that Beverly is a skilled professional and wants to catch the Ripper as much as anyone else. Instead, he keeps quiet, a nod of understanding as he looks to Miriam's room and Jack gives his own nod of parting, letting Will leave without saying anymore.

As he enters the room, his eyes go to the vase by Miriam's bed. The sweet William in reds and pinks with white mingled in the leaves of some, then he notices the way Miriam's eyes avoid it.

"Neither of us are really free," Miriam speaks without looking directly at Will, she turns to look at the flowers. "You will be caught, if you haven't already."

“He sent you the flowers?” Will asks, already knowing the answer. Truly he should feel some fear knowing the Ripper still has eyes for him, but it has become well known knowledge he doesn’t bat an eye.

“Even before there were always sweet William in his designs… He has his eye on you… You have the ability to see him, like I did.” There is a look of remorse and sympathy as she stares into Will’s eyes, a knowledge of the pain he must have for being able to see.

“He wanted you to be free,” Will pauses, a light nod of understanding the Ripper a little more. The world was a more beautiful place with Miriam in it, with her knowledge and intuition, he had awed the Ripper, but what was the difference between them? Her lack of empathy in being able to understand him. Unlike Will’s own, he knew he understood the Ripper better than anyone else even would, perhaps even the Ripper himself. “Were still all part of his design.”

“It felt too good to be true when I had a taste of freedom, I know I can never get away from what he has done to me and what he is doing. It feels like I’m waiting for him to walk through that door, even though I don’t know what he really looks like, it feels like he is still watching me, waiting.” Miriam tuned her head away when tears formed in her eyes, reliving the months of horror that had likely happened, the unspoken truth of her unborn child in the air for Will.

The Ripper knew that Miriam would abort the pregnancy, Will feels as though the Ripper had been counting on it. Because it was not her pregnancy he was interested in.

Hands fell to his own stomach as he stepped back, turning as he left the room and pieces fell into place. Feet carried him to the men’s toilets as all his pieces on the Ripper came back to the forefront of his mind.

The sweet William...

His empathy...

The scene of the family and consuming each other…

Hannibal’s help with hiding the body of the Executioner, his lack of emotion at the situation because he had been counting on it and Will asking for his help, because…

He was the Ripper. And Frederick Chilton was to be the patsy to cover his tracks.

Frederick had played right into Hannibal’s hands with his eagerness to help, to speak to Miriam and trying so hard to be able to get the first survivor story from a victim who lived after being with the Ripper for so long. While his intentions were to publish it in a psychiatry journal and have his name in lights, the FBI would look at his eagerness as a chance to try and cover his tracks.

Pulling himself together, Will breathed in the stall of the toilet as he sat on the lid, taking out his phone and calling the daycare. He told them he would be running late, there was a moment he wished to say if he could speak to his son but it would be pointless. He just

wanted to hear the boy laugh to remind him of the one good thing he had in his life before he went to see Hannibal.

As he gathered himself up, he got a call from Jack, he didn't answer it, letting it go to voice message instead as he left the hospital, getting into his car and heading to Hannibal's office where he knew the alpha would be.

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Entering the waiting room of Hannibal's office, Will stood there looking at the door, wondering if Hannibal was waiting for him now or if it was an unexpected surprise. It wouldn't be, after the Executioner, Hannibal had been there with him, trying to keep him focused on him, he was waiting for Will. Hannibal was waiting for his acceptance and Will didn't know what he was ok with.

Knocking, his knuckles ached slightly after, reminiscent of that day not so long ago. He looked down at them, expecting to find blood there after touching Hannibal's door, but there was nothing.

Footsteps came, evenly, a click and then the door swung open to reveal Hannibal, surprise written minutely on his face for a brief second before he broke out to a warm open smile and held the door wider to allow Will passage into his domain.

"Hello Will, what an unexpected delight." Hannibal greeted, tilting his head when Will did not return the greeting.

Hesitantly, Will stepped in, feeling as though he was entering into the den of the Ripper. A glance to the desk, he could see in his mind's eye a chair of antlers that were coated in blood, yet wide enough to sit two people. He avoided it and headed to the small round table that Hannibal's drawing's resided on. If Hannibal was going to leave behind any evidence, it would be through is food which Will had eaten, or in his drawings. The art would give Hannibal the means to relive his creations without having unnecessary attention placed on him.

As the door closed, Will sifted through the pictures Hannibal had drawn, some of himself naked or sleeping, another where he held Eros smiling. It was under that one that Will found the picture of himself over the executioner, blood on his hands as he looked at the body beneath him. He paused looking at the drawing before laying it to the side and picking up the picture of the man in the cherry blossom tree, chest cavity open as he was draped in a fine cloth, the heart and brain held in the right hand and the liver held in the left. It was the exact image Will had seen at the scene, perfect in everyway.

He could feel Hannibal behind him now, not turning, he wondered if this was where it was going to end, if Hannibal was going to kill him. "I didn't tell Jack." He spoke quietly, no fear in his voice, he was more impressed with how well Hannibal had hidden it from him while still leaving the clues. "If I did, I would look as guilty as you."

"Is it guilt you feel now knowing the truth about me?" Leaning in, Hannibal let his nose travel along Will's shoulder and came to his neck, scenting him, not smelling any fear or

danger, there was acceptance. It seemed Will was telling the truth, and for him it was beneficial, Eros had played a key part in the decision, the knowledge that if Will had also been convicted the child would be forever alone and separated from them likely.

“You know better than that,” scoffed Will, feeling annoyed at Hannibal’s words, his game. “We both know I understand you, and that is what you wanted, to be seen…” Pausing, Will turned slowly, looking up to meet hazel eyes. “I see you, Hannibal.”

“That you do,” comes the reply, smug and proud of Will finally knowing what he is. “But you still remain oblivious to your own true nature.”

“I’m nothing like you,” Will moves past, needing to walk, to move. “We’re nothing like you.” He stops by the desk, fingers touching the corner gently, reminding himself it is nothing more than something simple like the chair that sits behind it. It is not a throne. “I’m glad Eros can’t eat protein yet. But you know I have already soiled that, the chocolate.”

“The blood was from a cow, only in the derogatory sense.” Hannibal stood, watching Will nod at his words. “I would give our son a choice.”

“Like you gave me a choice?!” Will turned, furious at Hannibal now because there was no choice with the alpha, it was carefully calculated manipulation. “My choices were kill a man and hide the evidence or admit to murder and be locked away.”

“I would not have permitted that to happen.”

“No,” Will stops, letting out a laugh. “You had been planning an alibi for months, and I am impressed… Tell me, how did you manage to get Frederick’s DNA to impregnate Miriam? I’ve been curious about that.”

“I take it Jack has not searched Frederick’s home yet.” Hannibal smirks a little, annoying Will more.

There were parts missing, things Hannibal was waiting to show Will, just how brilliant he was, but he was being careful, not overextending his hand. Saying enough to maintain his innocence. “I’m not wearing a wire.”

“I know,”

Will nodded again. “You would have smelt it on me I presume.”

“Yes,”

For a moment, Will wanted to ask where they go from here, but he couldn’t. “You would eat my heart if you had the chance, it is a part you have thought of trying before.”

“Yes, though I believe it would be consumed both raw and cooked, I would want to savour every part of it. Yet in doing so I would also lose you, and life is far more interesting with you in it, Will. You are quite unpredictable at times.” Hannibal gazed at Will fondly, eyes sweeping over the omega and drinking him in like the finest wine. How beautiful he looked

when he knew the truth, how he was not afraid as many others would have been, like MIriam was when she discovered him.

Hand clenching into a fist, Will moved forward acting on his first impulse. Striding towards Hannibal, he right fist connected with Hannibal's cheek, hard enough to knock Hannibal back a few steps. Will used the movement to trip him, watching Hannibal fall to the ground before he was on top of him with his hands around his throat, choking him hard.

Hannibal, took Will's hands in his own, looking into those feral blue eyes with awe. "Not hiding behind the gun anymore." He spoke with reverence, smiling as blood trickled from his mouth now.

"No," Will grunted, twisting Hannibal's hand before he then maneuvered to stand on his arm to hold it back. "I'll kill you with my bare hands!"

As he said it, hands tightened around Hannibal's throat again, cutting off the airway. Instead of putting up a fight, Hannibal went limp and let Will do as he pleased, annoying Will further as he released his grip and continued to try again. He wanted Hannibal to fight, he wanted to feel him move under him and try and escape this fate he was bestowing upon him, instead, Hannibal let himself be at his mercy.

Letting go, he stood, moving away from Hannibal as Will swore under his breath. Even now, he couldn't kill the Ripper, he couldn't kill who he understood perfectly well. Letting out a howl of rage, it left Will feeling empty inside afterwards, chest heaving while his hands still ached from being around Hannibal's throat.

"Acts of violence," Hannibal gathered himself up, drawing the pocket square and dabbing the blood away from his lips before he looked at Will, his neck holding a red mark around it from Will's hands where it would bruise. "Require a high degree of empathy… If you followed the urges you kept down for so long, cultivated them as the inspirations they are, you would have become someone other than yourself."

"You knew killing the Executioner would make me then keep your secrets too… You knew, because you knew my fear of leaving Eros alone." Will felt tears brimming in his eyes, everything before this, had all been leading to this moment. "You were alone, in the darkness, when you first met me you were intrigued… You found someone like yourself who could see and understand you. Only when we met again, I was not alone anymore. I had a family, I had changed and in bringing Eros into your life and being with you, I changed you."

Falling to his knees, Will did not wish to look at Hannibal anymore, only hoping the world would swallow him or that he would feel the sweet kiss of Hannibal's knife and that it would be quick. He had not been expecting kindness.

Tilting Will's head, Hannibal cupped the omega's face as he leaned in and kissed him softly. "You changed me, Will. And I changed you. You gave me something I never thought I would be able to have, and even now, there is the possibility for so much more. We are in that darkness, together, no longer alone."

Will stilled as Hannibal kissed him, gently as hands travelled down his body. It was the kiss he had come to to know in the morning, when Hannibal opened his eyes and saw him for the first time, as if he was a man who was in the desert without water finding an oasis and so relieved. He couldn't kill Hannibal, he couldn't kill the Ripper. In truth he loved a part of each and Hannibal saw it, cherished it and accepted him, something he never had before.

"In time I hope you will join me at the table," Hannibal stroked a hand through Will's curls, there was hope, but knowledge that WIll wasn't quite there. "But I will be happy regardless, so long as you are by my side."

There was so much Will wanted to say, instead he let Hannibal calm him as he stayed close. "Jack is probably trying to get hold of me to go over the scene."

"You should, I'm curious as to what conclusion you will draw." Hannibal replied with a soft smile.

"You want to bury Chilton with this… To make him look like the Ripper. Were you planning on never bringing him back?" Will asked, speaking more about the killings.

"The Ripper's kills will be absent when Frederick is behind bars." Hummed Hannibal, pleased with the thought.

"But you will never stop killing," Will sighed. "Just promise me one thing, ask me before you decide someone is better off as a roast than walking among us. And don't serve it to Eros, let him have that choice."

Hannibal only smiled in response, leaning forward as he kissed Will's forehead and hearing the ring of Will's cell phone.

-

It was awkward leaving Hannibal's office, the knowledge Will had now as he went to one of Hannibal's scenes at Chilton's home. Part of him was still furious at what Hannibal had done, but he could live with it, was at ease with who Hannibal was. He knew he should feel more emotion, but he was strangely accepting, almost to the fact he scared how at ease he was with himself.

Finally walking into Chilton's basement, he let out a breath at the expanse of medical equipment and gear Hannibal had let go of. There was so much there to catalogue and go through, Katz, Price and Zeller would be here for days sifting through it, but it did not let anyone question that Chilton was the Ripper.

"Hey stranger, couldn't get a hold of you, glad you decided to show up. Thought we would have to send out a search party!" Beverly teased, waving him over to a freezer. "Wanted to hear your thoughts on this?"

Coming closer, Will peeked into the freezer where a male body was laying, posed around sweet William. "It was Chilton's lover… Or what he thought was his lover. No one knew he had anyone else in his life."

“My guess is, he’s been dead a while, preserved in the freezer as a tribute.” Beverly looked over the body again, it was still thawing out.

“It’s likely he died, maybe he was pregnant when he did and that is why Miriam was then artificially inseminated… He wanted a family.” Will smiled, knowing that Hannibal had already got that wish, he could see something through this design though, a loved one lost before, a chance to have something so pure again. “Did they catch Chilton yet?”

“I’m guessing you haven’t heard?” Beverly stopped to look at Will before she grinned sheepishly. “He walked into Miriam Lass’s room at the hospital, probably trying to do something, but she acted pretty fast when she must have recognised him… She broke his eye socket, his jaw… He won’t be talking for a while, may not be able to before the trail. If you ask me it’s a pretty open and shut case, but he’ll be stuck in the infirmary at the hospital for a few months before any trail starts.”

It sounded like poetic justice to most except Will, Miriam could not know the truth, but Will would make sure that Hannibal never laid a finger near her again. She had given up enough for his freedom, their freedom.

“Considering the Ripper was a cannibal, he must have truly loved this man to have not eaten all of him, a body left to mourn seems unusual.” Price came over, looking into the freezer.

“We were never always sure of the Ripper’s intentions, at least Jack has his man now.” Will spoke, turning to leave.

“Where are you going?” Beverly asked.

“Home, Jack doesn’t need me. Everything you need is here waiting for you.” He smiled.

Silently, he left the scene, making little fuss on his way out and avoiding people before he got into the car and went to pick up Eros. By the time the pair arrived back to Hannibal’s home in Baltimore, he wondered what the alpha would be doing now.

Walking into the house, he could smell the scent of fresh rosemary and basil in the air, following it into the kitchen where Hannibal was looking into the oven examining a roast.

“The Chesapeake Ripper has been caught by Jack CRawford and Miriam Lass and is now awaiting trial.” Will smiled. “I’m curious as to how you got Frederick to go to Lass’s room and the flowers.”

“Frederick was always eager to try and publish something original, to be the first to do so. His nature is quite predictable.” Hannibal looked to Will who was holding Eros, curious but believing that WIll had come to terms and had settled for living a life with him behind the veil. “Are you staying for dinner?”

Will couldn’t help but to smile at that, to hear the uncertainty and hope in Hannibal’s voice and to see him so clearly now. Closing the distance between them, he leant in to kiss Hannibal’s cheek. “For this one, and many more. Someone needs to help you prepare the roast.”

It made Hannibal tilt his head, curious.

“Killing must feel good to God, too. He does it all the time, and are we not created in his image?” Will smiled, accepting that life with Hannibal would require sacrifice. There was a beauty in it. He was still afraid of what he was, even if he understood everyone else, there were still truths about himself he had only scratched the surface on, while he could live with the knowledge of what Hannibal was, but observation and participation were separate. There was a line he was not willing to cross.

“Yes.” Hannibal smiled, kissing Will gently before turning his attention back to Eros. “To the first of many family dinners, luckily I prepared a beef roast.”

Chapter End Notes

I know this is quite a sudden finish, I was surprised too, but this is what I felt worked best. There is still so much more to this developing relationship considering they both see each other.

There is also the question of what happens to Frederick and how did Hannibal manage to get a sample etc, along with Alana and Margot. I will be answering these in either an epilogue or a separate timestamp fic, a series. I don't know when, but it will be done, at this moment I would like to go back and work on some other WIP that I have going on here and on my other account.

Thank you so much to everyone who has taken the time to comment, kudo's and read my work, who has reached out and told me what they thought. It has been so lovely to get the feedback and so many positive people reaching out to me, it really helped me keep my focus on the story and gave me the motivation to write. I don't say this because I felt pressured to write, I say it because when I felt like my writing was not good enough, that I felt my work was not as good as other authors in this fandom, your comments really gave me something to cherish because you showed that you were interested and you enjoyed what I was creating and sharing with you, and for that I am truly thankful to everyone who read my work and shared their ideas and love! <3

Lastly, to my beautiful besties Fhimechan, Cinnamaldeide, Purplesocrates, Fataldrum, Funkyraccoon, Aksst, Avidreader2004, SofancyDancy, oftempestsandteacups, le-wendigogo, lovecrimemp3, krey-9-joyce and everyone else who I have spoken to about this, thank you for listening, thank you for helping, for reading my work and commenting and pointing things out to me or sharing your ideas and thoughts! Without you I would have probably not finished it or would have published something entirely different! You are all truly wonderful!

Thank you everyone! xoxoxox <3

Part 2 Chapter 1

Chapter Summary

> Please read with caution in the first part of Margot and Hannibal as it contains mentions and some depiction of animal abuse/violence. I do not condone any acts of violence towards animals, this has been added to give Margot more depth and a better understanding for the reader of her motivations.

Chapter Notes

> I decided to continue this here instead of making a part 2 or series, as it should all blend in together.
>
> Please read with caution in the first part of Margot and Hannibal as it contains mentions and some depiction of animal abuse/violence. I do not condone any acts of violence towards animals, this has been added to give Margot more depth and a better understanding for the reader of her motivations.

As snow falls outside, Margot stands at the window and watches, gathering her strength for the question she has for Hannibal. Alana had encouraged her, saying that Hannibal was a friend, that he could help.

In truth, the only way anyone was able to help her was by killing Mason and allowing her to be free. When she went and sat in the chair opposite, she wondered why he did not sit at the desk, though it was an impromptu appointment really, she had just come to the decision on her drive back to the mansion.

Most would call the place they live home, for Margot, it was more like a prison. Something she was forced to return to as though there was a curfew. If Mason had discovered what she had been doing, there would be issues. She had disguised the outing as a chance to go to the tack store.

“This is an unexpected surprise.” Hannibal spoke breaking Margot’s thoughts and making her eyes meet his, crossing his legs as he looked to Margot, seeing the questions dance on her mind now that she was paying attention to him. She had changed since he had last seen her, in more ways than one. “To what do I owe the pleasure?”

“Alana speaks highly of you,” Margot started, the glance up told her it was to no avail to try and sugar coat the doctor, he would not be easily swayed by simple flattery. “That is why I

thought it best to see you, because you have established trust with her. You mentored her for years, she likes to think she knows you well."

There was a slow nod from Hannibal, "You seem cautious about this," He suspected that trust Alana had was not shared.

Margot suspected something dark lurking within Hannibal, could see edges he tried to hide, there was something there she felt on instinct, a caution to pursue with. "It's in my nature to be cautious given my past events. I know what it is like to be hurt and betrayed by someone close."

"Unfortunately we do not get to choose our family, but we can be careful with who we choose to talk to and love." Leaning forward, he clasped his hands together. "What has made you more fearful?"

There was a smile, twisted and painful. "Loss can be devastating, to lose someone we love or care about. Even our animals. They can become like family to us, and others can use that against us if they so desire."

Taking a deep breath, Hannibal tilted his head, waiting silently for her to continue.

Tears brimmed in Margot's eyes as she remembered her horse, the paint known as Cisco she had for years, raised and loved. "My family has been in the meat business for so long, we even have a vet on staff… Still, Mason found it necessary to make sure my young colt was gelded. To prevent him reproducing and calm his attitude towards him."

As she spoke, the memory of the young colt played in her mind, the days she spent grooming him and feeding him carrots, the kisses she would give him. Mason had been unkind to the poor colt though, he played with his lips, encouraging him to bite where he then called it 'coltish behaviour'.

"He bit Mason, drew blood to his finger. He insisted that the colt be gelded. At the time I saw no harm in the decision, until Mason said he would do it himself."

Her poor Cisco had been hogtied, rolled onto his back. There was no sedative, only Mason holding a sharp knife, she couldn't watch her poor colt whinny in pain as her brother cut his testicles from his body. What had been more horrifying at the time was Mason then feeding them to his special pigs.

"Cisco had to be put down a week later due to sepsis," Even as she says it now, tears roll down her cheeks and her voice breaks for a moment, the pain of her loss evident. "But where most would be able to bury their beloved pet in the paddock, Mason insisted that every part of him be used."

A deep breath as she steals herself, she can hear the dismemberment of Cisco still in her mind. "Every piece of him, hooves, legs, neck, body. Mason cut it all up and fed each piece to his pigs as he made me watch… My brother has no kindness within him, he finds enjoyment in pain and suffering."

“I’m sorry for your loss,” there is true remorse in Hannibal’s tone. “Human emotions are a gift from our animal ancestors. Cruelty is a gift humanity has given itself.”

“They say the worst sign of sociopathic behaviour is cruelty to animals.” For years she has known that Mason is not normal, ever since he was a boy it was evident.

“It is, but you are not looking for a term to refer to Mason. You have been aware he is different for a while.” Hannibal speaks. “Why have you chosen to tell me about this event today Margot?”

It’s easy to nod, to look away and feel shame for a brief second at being caught. “I know you are aware of the will my father out in place in the event of his death. It has been a hot topic for some in the social circles. The number of invites I have received to certain types of parties have never ceased to amaze me.”

The parties mentioned are the ones proud parents hold for their omega’s mainly, while some hold parties for alpha’s, omega’s in the upper class are normally paraded at times to try and find a wealthy alpha or suitable match to marry. One that suits the family more than just what the individual wants. Luckily since he and Will announced their bonding, the invites have ceased.

“Yet it is something you will not have to concern yourself with much longer. I presume you are about two months along now. Was Alana aware of your intention to become pregnant? To change your biology to carry a child?”

“How-” She is slightly taken aback at how aware Hannibal is to the situation already.

“Your scent has changed, I noticed when you walked past me before.” He merely says, not phased. “Hormone replacement therapy is not unheard of in female alpha’s.”

Sitting in silence, Margot looks back out the window. “I went through it at a private clinic, so Mason would not find out. You can basically have your own designer baby with today’s technology, it was simple to ask that I have a boy to make sure the requirements of the will would be met.”

“While it is practical for you to have the child, are you prepared for the raising of him into this world? The repercussions that Mason will deal out.”

“Yes and no. Do I want this child, yes. Alana is fully aware of what I have done and supports me, as for Mason… He can’t know until the child is born.” A slight tremor of fear leaves her on the last, because even after her son is born, she stills fears what Mason will do. Though she would have no hesitation in killing him. It is likely he would know this and would strive to be the first to murder however. “He knows I want to kill him though, I still bare the scars from the last attempt.”

“Of which you received therapy for, though you would find more benefit from it if you had actually succeeded in your plan.” Hannibal stands, walking towards his desk.

“Are you encouraging me to kill my brother Dr. Lecter?”

“A reflection on the past, but what you seek now is not a plan, but an escape. A house to call home for awhile until you have given birth. At least that is what I presume from your abrupt visit?” There were already plans forming, surely Will would agree with the murder of Mason Verger, he knew of his torments upon Margot, even Alana had spoken of it at times, though more concern for her partner.

“I need a place my brother will not be able to find, I am happy to pay for it. Though you would be the last person he suspects.” Margot speaks earnestly.

Hannibal pauses for a moment, taking in the information which could be useful. He goes back to looking through a draw, a house he bought that is in Italy, one that is under Chiyoh’s name but never been used. “An uncle of mine left me a villa in Italy that would suit you, you will find all the information you need here. I will make a call to have it prepared for you.”

As the file is handed over, Margot takes it, looking at it quickly with raised eyebrows. “Thank you.” She will not question it any further, though she may still be wary, it is not often she receives genuine help or assistance, more so when it comes to getting in the way of her brother, most are afraid of him, of what he is capable of.

“I trust you have cash and a passport to be able to find your way to Italy.” Hannibal knows that Margot is well connected enough, she will have some means and influence that will not reach her brother and she is intelligent enough to leave the country undetected.

“Everything can be organized, I’ll tell Alana now and leave tonight. I can’t risk Mason finding out, more so if you are already able to detect the change.” Looking down, she sees the photo of Eros and Will on his desk, turned to face him, but they look happy. “Life becomes so different when you have your own child to care for, suddenly your no longer on your own and you have something to lose.”

“I don’t intend to let that happen anytime soon.” Looking down to the photo, he remembers the day he recently took it. “You will make a great mother, Margot.”

They don’t say goodbye, instead, Margot leaves with the folder, leaving Hannibal alone with the thoughts on how best to serve Mason Verger to his husband.

Given Will has been wanting to do something outdoors recently, perhaps he could put Mason on a roast spit for them.Though it would never go down well in Baltimore, perhaps wolf trap where they would have more privacy.

With a sly smile to himself, Hannibal continues on the day.

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“So did you send her somewhere safe at least?” Will asks as he holds Eros in his arms, helping the boy hang ornaments on the christmas tree. It’s a first for Will, and as he looks at Hannibal he sees a softness in the alpha’s eyes. Will suspects he has not been the only one who has not been putting up a celebration for christmas for the last few years. Now though, Hannibal is keen to photograph the moment and Will secretly loves the way he gets to dress the dogs and Eros in ridiculous outfits that make Hannibal frown. He’s tempted to find the

worst christmas jumper and bring it home and try and force Hannibal to wear it, but he will probably be deterred by sex. All the more reasons to buy it!

Since they have mated, his loss of time completely stopped along with the headaches. It feels as though he is healthier than before, even some of the dreams have ceased, possibly just because Hannibal rouses him and holds him close, allowing him to breath in the strong scent of his alpha and feel the steady heartbeat that he then times to match.

“Nowhere is truly safe from Mason, but her tracks have been hidden well.” assures Hannibal, phone in his hand as he takes another photo of Eros giggling and hands clutching the red ball instead of helping to hang it. “She will be returning in about five months as she will give birth at the local hospital.”

For a moment, Will shoots a glare at Hannibal, knowing in someway what he was planning. “With a birth announcement.”

“The more official, the better. It will ensure Margot is able to take over the family fortune.” There is no remorse in his decision, it has been made. “Mason Verger is a problem. Problem solving is hunting.”

Tickling Eros, he sets the one-year old down and watches him toddle off towards the tree, Winston following with reindeer antlers still perched on his head. As Eros sits at the base of the tree, so does Winston, letting the boy move the antlers and entertain himself.

“I can’t disagree with you.” Truly, it is more difficult to like Mason Verger than to hate him. The only reason he received the inheritance instead of Margot was because he was the only male in the family, alpha, beta or omega did not matter to his father. He simply wanted to continue the lineage through a male heir. “You want to make sure their are precautions in case Mason acts for his own interests.”

“An unborn child has no rights as they are not considered living, where as if the child is born.”

“It becomes murder.” finished Will, feeling a shiver run through him. Mason was more than capable of that or having it done. “You’re making plans, aren’t you?”

“One must always be ready for the unprepared and have plans put in place.” Moving behind, Hannibal let his arms wrap around Will as he kissed him on the neck. “I believed you would not want to be involved.”

“No.” Looking at Eros, Will had been careful the last few months. Since their mating, he was relieved in someway to discover he was not pregnant. Being with Hannibal, living together as a family had been uncomplicated so far. It was difficult being able to know how people were killed, and some eaten by his alpha. The only unease he felt was with himself because part of him, very deep down wanted to, but his conscious ws ever present. With Eros, it made it more complicated because he had to look after their son, what could happen if Hannibal was discovered, that Will knew and did nothing to stop his alpha. “I’m curious as to what you will use, though a drag hunt should be left as well.”

The slightest smirk came from Hannibal with a small nod, it had been a while since he hunted, he was looking forward to cultivating a carefully laid plan for the man.

“I guess that’s your christmas present sorted,” there was a gentle laugh, an effort to release the weight he felt suddenly. “How do you shop for the man who has everything anyway?”

“By simply being by my side on christmas day. It has been a long time since I had a family to celebrate with, Both of us.” Hannibal reminisced about his younger years, remembering how his own father had helped Mischa put the star on top of the tree. It felt right to follow tradition.

Leaving Will standing near the tree, Hannibal came over to Eros and lifted the boy up, handing him the star they were going to use to top the tree. “Can you help Papa decorate the tree?” The excited squeal came from Eros, taking hold of the star, Hannibal made sure it didn’t go in the boys mouth at all as he then lifted him up, a little help to place the star at the top of the tree before he brought Eros back to his chest, kissing the top of his head.

Naturally, Will had snapped a couple of pictures before he went over and turned the lights of the tree on, watching Eros’s face light up with them. He came over standing next Hannibal as he leaned over and kissed him. “It’s beautiful.”

Will’s words were as soft as his lips, when Hannibal looked at him he saw the lights dance in his omega’s eyes, flicks of red played over his skin as did an assortment of other colours, but Hannibal was captured by how good Will looked, how beautiful he would be if he truly accepted his own nature and joined him in the hunt.

Chapter of Part 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

-June- Eros is nearly 2 years and is ahead for his age (1 year ¾)

The new dog had just gone outside to pee when it ran off, Winston and Zoe went back into the house while Will and Eros chased after the new dog Toby.

“TOBY!” Will yelled as the little dog stopped on the side of the street, a car going past as Will took a breath. Picking up Eros first, he handed the small Jack Russel pup to him and helped him to hold the dog as they went back inside the house.

“Still not properly trained yet I see.” Hannibal tutted playfully.

After being let down, Eros held Toby as he walked to his high chair casually. “Bad Toby, good boy.”

Will simply rolled his eyes, smiling as he followed Eros and then took the pup from his hands. Heset him on the floor then lifted Eros into his seat for breakfast. “You need breakfast before we go out. Then you can help Papa with the surprise he has for our lunch.”

There was a casual glance thrown to Hannibal with a flirty smile. “Seeing as he won’t tell me.”

“Puppy, Toby come to!” Eros begged a little using his own best puppy eyes on his dads.

“No,”

“Yes,”

Turning to look, Hannibal was smiling at WIll. “I said he could bring Toby, I believe I found a home that would suit him with a family.”

“You found someone without asking me?”

“He has been coming with me this past week to see a patient while you have not been home. Forgive me Will, but 3 dogs would be too much. As it is, Toby needs a place well fenced, that is the ninth time in the past few days he has escaped and been on the road.” Standing there, Hannibal kept his tone soft andWill knew it was true.

The last thing both parents wanted was for Eros to follow Toby one time, which had been close this morning. “Ok, at least I get to meet them.”

“Always, my love.” Leaving the bench with three plates of crepes and some ice-cream on one side for Eros, they settled in and ate in silence until they had to leave.

Pulling a coat from the cupboard, Will packed an extra into the diaper bag before kneeling down and helping Eros pull the jacket on. It was a cold day in June, the warmer weather had not been coming just yet. “Do you have to go to the toilet?” Will asked quietly, watching the boy shake his head. “Do you want to try in case?”

“No daddy,” Eros protested, one foot stomping on the floorboards as he huffed. “I a big ogre with layers!”

It made Will chuckle and dropped the subject, picking the boy up. He wondered when he had gotten so big so quickly. He was growing before his eyes and turning into the both of them.

“Ogres have layers?” Hannibal asked, curious as to what Will had been telling the boy.

“And papa!” Eros chimed in unannounced. “Papa always haf layers.”

“That’s right, ogres and papa have layers, and when it is really cold outside so does Eros and Daddy.” Will winked at Hannibal. “I’m sure when we put Shrek on Papa will know what layers mean then.”

“I had hoped a documentary would be far more entertaining and broaden his horizons.”

“Hann, he’s barely 2, let him enjoy some things. Besides, it teaches him some good social ques, and will also make him understand his own empathy more in a healthy way, so it stays. You can read him tales of the Grimm when he is older and those documentaries. At least give him the chance to fit in at daycare.” Will finished, he wasn’t leaving it up for argument. He had studied some of the older children, talked to some of the day care workers at the academy and learned about what the children did. There was that burning desire to give Eros everything he never had, and this was a major first step.

He knew Hannibal only wanted the best, but it could also prove to be isolating. When he looked at their own lives, he wanted to see Eros truly smile as he does now, not fake it around everyone all the time. He didn’t want his boy to act like someone he wasn’t.

“Is papa grumpy like lord fa-fa-farkward?” Eros asked as Will strapped him in, he saw Hannibal’s eyes widen, his mouth open but he stepped in before anything happened.

“Lord Farquuad, I know it’s hard, try your quacks again. Like a duck.” Will laughed as Eros smiled and did a few, quieting down as the movie came on. He left him peacefully watching the first movie as he got into the front. He watched Hannibal bring out the dog carrier with Toby inside of it. The pup was already laying down quietly and falling asleep after the run it had that morning.

He took Hannibal’s hand, seeing the question burning in his eyes about the kind of swearing. “He can’t pronounce it just yet and I’m not going to punish him for an accident. It’s like the toilet training. We just keep going and praise him when he does it right.”

“Yes, about that-”

“He’s learning, takes a lot after you I swear,” Will chuckled. “He’s trying and has made it twice now since we started last week. The daycare said it would not hurt him to learn early because he is so advanced for his age.Don’t you dare start on Freudian theory on me or I will have to find a better use for that mouth… again.” There was a cheeky glance, a squeeze of Hannibal’s hand. Instead of an answer Will got a ravaged kiss before they finally set off.

-

During the hour long drive, Will had fallen asleep before Eros, leaving Hannibal to look in the rear view mirror and watch the boy suck his thumb contently. As he was nearing the house on the cliff, he gentle roused Will with a few light touches before holding his hand.

Taking a deep breath, Will opened his eyes to the bleary view of a high coast line. It had been a while since he had been to the sea. He smiled as he watched waves crash in the distance and sat up a little more. Their surroundings looked baron except for the cliffs, then the small driveway appeared along with the house. They pulled in and parked next to an SUV.

“Seems quaint.” Will replied, looking over to his alpha with a small smile. “When did he fall asleep?”

“Shortly after you, or when the donkey character started singing I believe. Not a tone that would put me to sleep, but regardless.” Hannibal smiled, watching Will laugh in silence before undoing his seatbelt and going to the backseat.

“Hey, did you have a good nap? I know I did.” Will spoke quietly, undoing the boy and taking him out.

“Daddy,” Eros pouted slightly, Will knew why.

“Lets go inside and find a bathroom hey?” Will said holding him close to his chest as Hannibal handed over the diaper bag.

Will was trying to figure out why they were here when the door of the house opened and a heavily pregnant Margot stepped out to great them.

“Auntie Mar-go!” Eros yelled excitedly wriggling in Will’s arms wanting to be put down. He complied and let the boy down onto his feet, watching him rush to Margot who scooped him up easily.

“Hello, look how big you’ve gotten.” She said kindly, giving a smile to Will. “Did you bring Toby with you today?”

Margot was of course asking Eros, the boy nodded furiously as Hannibal let the small pup out of the crate, letting it run and go to the toilet before it came inside.

“I didn’t know you liked dogs,” Will said sheepishly walking forward to touch Eros, “May I,”

“No Daddy, wanna stay,” Eros whined softly, trying to nuzzle into Margot with little success.

“Don’t you want to play with Toby before we say goodbye to him?” Will tried, taking Eros from Margot now and holding him as she pointed down a corridor, knowing.

“Yes, but why Toby go bye bye?” There was a pout and Will could have been convinced to keep the dog. He knew how lucky Toby would be though with Margot, and they would see him grow.

“Not bye bye, we will see him again. He is going to live with Margot and Alana with the new baby.”

“Baby?” Eros repeated as Will walked through the house, down the hallway and into a bathroom.

“Yes,” Will said as he started to change Eros quickly, trying to keep him focused on the topic. “A little baby of their own, like daddy and papa have you, Margot and Alana will have a baby who they plan to call Morgan when he is born. Which will be very soon.”

After he pulled Eros’s pants up, Will put the boy on the ground, and watched him run out of the room and go to Margot, laughing.

“Aunt Mar-go” Eros asked kindly while standing in front of her, hands behind his back.Hannibal smirked over near the dinner table as he was setting up food and pouring a non-alcoholic wine. “Where’s your baby?”

After some discussion and confused faces from Eros, Margot let the boy come over and placed his hands on her belly where the baby was moving. When Eros felt the first kick he giggled loudly and called out for both his parents, wanting them to share the experience with him.

Will came closer, letting Eros take his hand and guide it to Margot’s swollen belly, at the first touch, he felt something move, then the little kick that made him laugh. “I don’t know about you, but someone thought my kidneys were soccer practice when I was having him.” Will spoke kindly while tousling Eros’s small curls.

“Same,” Margot replied with an exasperated sigh. “He loves sitting on my bladder I swear.”

“Not for much longer though,” Hannibal announced, there was a syringe with a clear liquid within it. “Inducing the labour will make it far easier than waiting and allowing you to return to society instead of hiding from your brother.”

“Will it hurt?” Margot asked, looking from Hannibal to Will.

Hannibal was about to answer when Will beat him to it. “Yes, there is no simple way to put it, but it is worth it in the end. You will be in good hands.” This he knew to be true because Hannibal was there, and he was sure a hospital would be involved.

“It is a slow acting drug, it will be a few hours but by the time you show up to the hospital in six hours, the contractions will have started. Then it will not be long until you can finally

hold Morgan, I will be monitoring in the meantime." It seemed like Hannibal had it all planned down to a tee, the lunch, the labour and killing Mason afterwards.

Knowing of some of the plan for killing Mason made Will annoyed, the sane part of him had not wanted to know anything, but another part of him did. There was a strong hatred towards Mason for what he had done to not only Margot, but other children as well. What Mason was, a pedophile, it made him a threat to Eros too. Will never wanted that to happen to his son, their son. It was why he would abide the murder of Mason, part of him almost wanting to take place in it. But Hannibal needed an alibi and Will had already agreed to knowing little details and stating if asked that Hannibal had spent the whole night at home.

The plan was a few days away. But now, with new information about what Hannibal had been doing, along with how comfortable and friendly Margot and Eros were. Will knew Hannibal had been coming to this place with their son and including him in something Will never wanted.

Even now as Margot received the syringe, this was a show for Mason because they had come as a family, driven Hannibal's Bentley to the house with no change of cars or false trail. It was meant to be known, to be seen. And part of Will was furious at Hannibal for being so blatant and bringing him and Eros into this without his knowledge.

A hiss came from Margot, making Will focus back on her. He watched Hannibal inject the solution into her arm, seeing it mix with her blood, then empty before being taken away. Eros still had his hands on her belly all the while.

"You should not feel it for another three to four hours yet." Hannibal commented, tone professional as he discarded the syringe safely so smaller hands would not touch it. "When the contractions start, I will drive you to the hospital."

Will watches, silent. He knows he will be discussing this later with his alpha when they are home and Eros is in bed. There is a great deal of mixed feelings about what is and has happened and the fact that Hannibal had just brought him in with no knowledge and expected him to be fine with the situation.

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Hannibal arrived home after midnight, taking off his jacket as Will stood in the foyer watching, before he finally spoke.

"How dare you take me and Eros to see Margot today without telling me, you know damn well that Mason has been watching out for her and you just strolled up in your car with the both of us to pick her up and take her to the hospital." Will started walking as he spoke, nowhere near Hannibal but he came closer gradually. His anger drove him towards the alpha, letting him know how he felt about the situation.

"You put us in danger, and then you think I will just forgive you. No Hannibal!" His voice was becoming louder as he got closer now. "How dare you take Eros to see Margot without me knowing, he is my son as well! What if something happened? I wouldn't know where the both of you were."

“Nothing did happen, he was always safe with me.”

“He may be safe with you but Mason knows now, and he is still alive, you ask me for permission and you have kept him alive this long and now put us in danger!” Will screamed, pushing Hannibal away when he crowded towards him. There was the urge to hit, to lash out for the reckless behaviour Hannibal had been doing, putting their son at risk.

“Mason Verger believes it was Alana, though he will not be alive for much longer, I can promise you that.”

“Don’t make promises you can’t keep Hannibal, I never thought I’d say this, but kill him. Get rid of him before he has the chance to hurt our son. You know he is capable, I don’t want to hear about him ever again, only through a memorial service. And don’t get caught!” Eyes met for a moment, staring into each other as Hannibal gave a simple nod, the simplest replies that Will was happy with before walking out and leaving Hannibal alone.

He headed up the stairs, checking on Eros to make sure he was still asleep first before taking a guest room. The anger he felt was still very present, raging in his veins and making it hard not to see red. It only lasted a little while before it crashed, leaving him sobbing in the pillow quietly about what had happened. He could not believe what Hannibal had done, but he should have known better. Afterall, Will mated with a man and a monster. Still, he expected better from Hannibal, and it was the betrayal of the monster that caused him harm. The monster that involved their son in this and was supposed to be killing Mason Verger yet decided to play with his food instead and draw out the most of it.

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Hannibal spent a great deal of time studying the movements of Mason Verger in his free time, watching from afar and learning his schedule through Margot. She was aware he was going to die, but believe Hannibal had hired someone to do it for her. However, she was accepting and at ease with her brother dying.

When the day finally came, Will had arranged for the daycare to hold Eros longer under the excuse of having a date with his alpha. Instead he sat at home waiting for Hannibal to return from muskrat farm with his prize.

It suited Hannibal to be alone, to sneak into Muskrat farm and take the prize he had wanted. It was a surprise for him though when he entered the barn, finding music playing loudly as he snuck up on Mason. It stopped abruptly and Mason turned to look at him, a serene smile on his face that seemed inappropriate.

“Why Dr. Lecter, I had expected a hit man, but not yourself. This is a fantastic surprise!” Mason delighted as he stood, four men appearing and joining Mason on top of the pig cage. “I do have the surprise for you though, I’d like you to see my latest creation. Something I was going to share with Margot, but now that she and her ‘piglet’ are in the house with a social worker, difficult to try. Such a shame, I always did enjoy making her squeal.”

The plastic suit Hannibal wears squeaks slightly as he moves, looking to Mason and then the four men standing around him. “Doctor-patient confidentiality allows her to speak openly, I

can only act when there is a threat to someone still living, something Margot was also well aware of. It worked in your favour, until now."

"Oh, are you going to kill me?" Mason laughs. "It seems like I have the upper hand doctor, so tell me how do you plan on levelling the playing field, or should I just feed you right now to my pigs?"

"Ciao Dottore," One of Mason's henchmen spoke as he moved forward.

"You are Sardinian," Hannibal smiled. "If you have to be kidnapped for ransom, a wealthy Italian will tell you it's better to fall into the hands of the Sards."

"I'm not interested in your money, no doctor. I want to see you squeal." Mason spoke while gesturing to his henchmen.

Hannibal stood at the ready, bracing himself for the fight, he could understand what they were saying, hearing the name Carlos who seemed to be the leader. One of the men lunged at him, Hannibal ducked, taking out his scalpel and sticking it into his leg in the femoral artery, he smiled as he righted himself and ducked a swing from another. As he did though, he received a kick to the gut that knock the wind out of him.

Unperturbed, he spun on the ground bringing down another man before snapping his neck quickly and standing again. Mason was watching from the sidelines, yelling at Carlos to kill him. Hannibal paid little attention to it though as he lunged for the man behind Carlos, knocking him to the ground before snapping his neck as well.

He could feel his chest protesting as he stood tall, walking in a circle with Carlos opposite him. "You could leave now, and I promise to not kill you."

Carlos ignored him though and lunged, Hannibal went to move but Carlos was too quick, hitting him in the face and bringing Hannibal down again. He pulled out a knife and straddled Hannibal trying to press it first to his throat, but Hannibal put up a fight, moving the knife away before breaking Carlos's wrist and forcing him to drop it. When he did, he picked it up and stuck it through Carlos eye. His death was instantaneous.

Standing again, Hannibal walked across to Mason who held his small pig knife out in front of him, it almost made Hannibal laugh. It was easy to snap his neck, to let his body drop to the floor before he took the knife and cut away clothing and tore a strip of meat from Mason's back.

Once it was packed away, he returned to the farm to roll the bodies into the pig pen, watching as the pigs devoured the flesh until it was hardly recognisable, he let them out and walked through them as he left to return home.

The trip was short, his Bentley parked away near the freeway under trees where no one would find it unless they were looking for it. Hannibal got in the car, viewing himself in the rearview mirror. He looked awful but nothing that was lasting.

Returning home, Hannibal walked through the door to find Will waiting for him in the foyer again.

“It’s done?” Will asked, coming closer to Hannibal.

When his alpha turned around and showed his face, Will was slightly shocked to see the cuts and bruises. “What happened?!”

“Mason and his henchmen, nothing more. But they are all taken care of and no one is none the wiser, it would appear to be an accident where his pigs escaped and maimed.” Hannibal spoke calmly, despite the discomfort from some of the cuts, he did not let it stop or distort his speech.

“No more Hannibal,” There was a plea to Will’s tone. “I can’t afford to lose you, nor Eros. This was too close… If you love us, please stop.”

The statement made Hannibal pause, looking at Will as he knew this was coming, he had been expecting it when he had looked in the mirror. “I promise, no more hunting.” He meant his words, a promise to keep.

Will studied Hannibal for a moment until he was pleased, leaning forward to softly kiss the right eye socket that was significantly bruised. “Forget dinner while you rest, you’ve done enough for today.” Will spoke, letting Hannibal move for a second before touching his shoulder. “Thank you,”

Letting his hands run over Hannibal’s body, Will lifted the shirt to see more bruising. “Just how bad is it?” He asked as he continued to look seeing the blue, purple and black hues that were adorning the warm flesh of his alpha. “I don’t care what you say, you’re having a bath, this looks awful, Hannibal.”

With a mere shrug, Hannibal took Will’s hand, bringing it to his lips, and kissed the back of it. “Anything else, darling?”

There was a playful swat. “Don’t you try and turn on the charm, doctor. Bathroom, now.” There was a playful laugh as he pointed to the stairs.

Obeying the simple command, Hannibal walked up to the bedroom, Will just behind. “I can call the daycare and get them to sit Eros longer.”

Upon entering the bedroom they parted, Will staying in the main room to make the phone call while Hannibal went to the bathroom and ran a bath for himself, adding bath salts and ointments to help.

When Will came in, Hannibal was just sitting down in the bath, Will wasted no time in stripping his own clothing to join him. “You look like a version of Van Gogh’s starry night.”

“Hardly, when I met Mason I was hardly expecting four men to be with him.” Hannibal admits. The killing of Mason had been the easy part, something Hannibal had greatly enjoyed.

Taking a cloth, Will started to rub Hannibal's back with it, removing the dried blood from a small wound. "I don't want to know, all I know is how close you came today, I see this and I think the worst. The what if's if I lost you, how I would explain to Eros, what would happen if an investigation was launched." There was a sigh, he stopped rubbing as he cuddled Hannibal close, letting his chin rest on the alpha's shoulder. "That's why I asked you to stop, we need you more than you know."

As the bath water helped to ease his muscles, Hannibal turned to bring Will in close, letting the omega straddle his lap as he looked up into bright blue eyes. "And I'm not going anywhere, nor do I intend to repeat today anytime soon. You have seen me Will, you allowed me this gift. Our lives are better off for it without Mason, Margot's life will move forward with Morgan. Alana is blessed with her own family now."

"Smooth talker," Will laughed, leaning down as he kissed the alpha's lips softly. His hands moved down Hannibal's body slowly, feeling the hard muscle before coming to his cock which was half erect.

There was a harsh kiss from Hannibal, hands coming to Will's ass and holding it firmly, finger dipping between cheeks as he started to play with his entrance. He let a finger poke and prod until slick started together, and then gently fingering him open as they continued to kiss.

"Are you always so aroused when I am to be injured?" Hannibal teased lightly.

"Only when you let me take care of you," Will retorted softly, nipping at lips before starting to sit on Hannibal's cock.

"Shhh" Will spoke, placing a finger on Hannibal's lips before the alpha could speak. "Don't ruin it. I like you like this, you look human," A wicked smile crossed Will's face for a brief second. "No suits, no defenses." He whispered.

He could feel how big Hannibal was, hips thrusting up gently as Will started to ride Hannibal smoothly, careful to not move too quick or thrust too harshly.

"What I want to see is you swollen with child, a baby girl or boy to join the family. See you hold them in your arms." Hannibal gently lifted his hips, holding Will against him as he started to thrust a little quicker then. He always enjoyed taking Will, more so when the omega sat upon him and rode him, the power play they had together.

"I could stop taking my suppressants, try for another child together." Will agreed, having been thinking of it recently when he had missed holding Eros. "Not right now, when he's three, a few years apart in their birthdays would be easier."

Leaning in closer, Hannibal nipped at the bonding mark upon Will's collarbone, tongue lapping the skin before focusing on Will's lips as he started to fuck him harder. "When he's three then, I'm going to breed you everyday until you are pregnant,"

Feeling Hannibal's knot starting to inflate, Will pushed down harder until it popped inside of him. He let out a low moan as he continued to ride him, kissing Hannibal until he finally

came, feeling the cock inside of him twitch and a hot warmth fill him. They sat conjoined in the warm bath water. Lazily stroking each other.

“You really want another child?” Will asked.

“Is it so bad to want another child with you and to give Eros a sibling?”

“No, I just didn’t think you were the type of alpha who would ever want children when I met you.” Will laughed as he tested the knot finding it still inflated too much to move. He decided to rest against Hannibal’s chest, letting the alpha stroke his hair gently.

“You took me by surprise, but when I met Eros, how could I say no or leave you alone in this world to fend for yourselves… I’m not a monster.”

“I know, you’re our alpha, and I am thankful that I have you to look out for our son.” Will finished, kissing Hannibal again.

The two stayed in the tub for a while, until the water started to turn cold at which point Will got out and retrieved the first aid kit, taking sterile gauze and dotting ointment on Hannibal’s wounds and cleaning them. “You’re going to have to think of an excuse as to why you are so bruised.”

“A fall down a set of stairs should suffice.”

“My clumsy old alpha.” Will taunted lightly as he applied a bandage to Hannibal’s shoulder. “Why not say the pots fell down on you, a kitchen accident would seem more appropriate.”

“And why would you believe that?” Hannibal asked as he took painkillers dry.

“Because you never seem to leave the place and that is what everyone seems to associate with you.” It was true, most people when they first came into the house were led to the kitchen or the dining room as that is where Hannibal spent most of his free time, preparing meals and doing something he enjoyed that provided to his family.

“It would be appropriate, and lead to less questions being asked.” Hannibal surmised in the end, taking Will’s hand in his own again and kissed it gently. “Thank you, Will.”

Will understood the thank you, not for what he was doing but for allowing Hannibal to kill Mason. Secretly, Will wished now more than anything that he had been there with Hannibal and helped him to finish off the man. At least he would be able to join Hannibal at the table to eat him. It was a meal he would not say no to anytime.

Chapter End Notes

Massive thank you to Messy scandinoodle for beta reading this lil monster and everyone who keeps encouraging me to write. This fic means a lot to me and I have so many ideas

for it. <3

I love each and every person who comments, please don't hate me for my silence, aI am humbled and blessed for every one and I will try and reply to each

Part 3 chapter 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Students were discussing the lecture as they left, or more importantly the assignment Will had just given to them. There was a tension in the air as they filed out, Will looking down as he sorted back all the files he had into his satchel. He could ee in the distance Jack, standing near the corner of the room, waiting for the students to leave. Whatever the alpha wanted there was no simple way of getting out and no way to avoid him.

It had been three years since Will had worked a case for Jack, since the Ripper had been caught. Or to Jack's knowledge, what he assumed to be the Ripper.

As the last of the students left, the alpha made his move and strode across the hall, walking up to Will with determination in his stride as he stood in front of the desk and watched for a brief second.

"Hello, Will." Jack spoke evenly, projecting the reason instantly to why he was there.

"Hello, Jack." Will threw back the same tone the alpha had used, staring him in the eye for a brief second before looking away and avoiding his gaze.

"It's a nice post you've gotten yourself here now." The alpha's gaze moved around the room before coming back to Will.

"It's the same post I had, before and after your last visits. Your not here to talk about students, so let's hear it." Will settled for no nonsense, he knew the reason and didn't want to listen to Jack sugar coat things.

For a moment Jack paused, licking his lips before he finally continued. "How much do you know?"

"Two families killed in their homes, similar circumstances." Will spoke, shrugging at the end as though it did not affect him.

"Not similar." Jack interrupted. "The same… Did you ever think about giving me a call?"

Will looked up for a brief second, cautious about continuing because he knew what was going to be asked of him. He swore he had given it up after Chilton being declared the Ripper, that he was going to stay out of the field and only work in teaching. Yet here was Jack trying to drag him back.

"No. I didn't call you because I gave it up Jack, I have a son to raise." Will looked to the doorway for a moment, picturing Hannibal and eros their waiting for him, the reasons he didn't want to go back into the field.

“And I’m trying to save lives.” Jack spoke the familiar line with Will trying to not let it get to him like before. “I just need you to look at the scene, tell me what you think. We have a few weeks before the lunar cycle, before he strikes again.”

Knowing Jack wasn’t going to fade away, Will held out his hands, ready to take the files Jack had brought with him. When they were handed over, Will put them in the satchel while glimpsing a few photos. “Just this case Jack.”

Will closed his satchel, pulling the strap over his shoulder as he walked out of class, leaving Jack behind him.

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Parking the car in the kindergarten carpark, the wind was chilly as Will walked towards the doors, spying through the windows Eros working on something with his teacher.

When he opened the doors, Eros stopped what he was doing, turning quickly before he smiled.

“Daddy!” He left his seat, running over to where Will now knelt to receive his hug from the boy. Holding him tight as he felt his nose brush wild curls before pulling back to look at him.

“Hello,” Will smiled back, happy to see his son so happy and full of life. He never got tired of seeing him smile at him, of him calling out to him or Eros’s hugs. “What have you been making?” He walked over to where the teacher was now standing. “Sorry I’m late.”

The teacher waved him off. “Your only a few minutes late, I gathered you got held back in your own class. I don’t mind, I understand how it can be with students.”

“Yeah, something like that.” He turned his attention to what Eros had created, looking down at the drawing where he could make out himself and Hannibal holding hands with Eros, only Winston beside them.

It had been a few months since Zoe had passed, at the time there had been many tears but Hannibal had sat down and explained to Eros that Zoe had passed away, and it meant she had gone to heaven. Will had stood outside the room listening as Hannibal explained death to their son, so carefully and making it so that Eros was not upset but somehow happy Zoe was in a happy place within the heavens. Naturally more questions followed, their boy was curious and intelligent, asking questions which sometimes left Will wondering when he would not hold all the answers Eros needed, but Hannibal was always there helping and giving their son what he needed to hear for now, because both knew there would be a day where they could not fix everything with a simple kiss or cuddle for the boy and a simple explanation.

“This is you daddy,” Eros pointed to a stick figure with ‘daddy’ written above it. “And this is Papa, and this is me and Winston!” Eros held the picture up for Will to see, proud of his work.

“It’s beautiful. Why don’t you get your bag and I’ll put it on the fridge when we get home.” Will responded as he took the offered picture, holding onto it with care as Eros then ran off to get his things.

Soon enough, Will held eros’s hand as they walked out of the kinder and back to the car. The old volvo had been replaced with a Bentayga when it had broken down, Hannibal insisting on something new. Will wanted a SUV thinking he could get something not so affluent. He was wrong. Hannibal had taken Will car shopping the next day, they had test drived the Bentayga and Will couldn’t deny he enjoyed the way the SUV handled compared to the old Volvo. He wondered how long Hannibal had been waiting to replace the old Volvo, even if the alpha had take it upon himself to make sure the other one did break down so he could give Will a new car.

After a short drive they arrived home, helping Eros from his car seat, he let the boy take the keys and open the door, Hannibal wasn’t home yet and Will was wondering what the alpha would say about hearing he would be going back out into the field.

Walking through the door, Will hung up his coat after closing the door, heading through to the kitchen where he opened his satchel and pulled out Eros’s artwork and pinned it to the fridge with the others.

“Can we have peanut butter jelly sandwiches daddy?” Eros asked as he came clambered up onto a stool.

“Sure kiddo, do you want yours toasted?”

There was an eager nod from Eros, a giant smile plastered on his face as Will got to work making the snack and putting on a show to entertain the four year old. Finally he presented the snack on a plate as he heard the front door opening.

“Papa!” Eros cried out as he left the stool and his snack running into the hallway to great Hannibal.

Will couldn’t be angry as he left the snack, knowing Hannibal would be far from impressed with his less than healthy choice. He came to lean against the doorway as he watched Hannibal hug Eros and kiss him on the cheek before putting the boy down again and walking up to where Will was waiting for his own kiss.

“You’ve been cooking.” Hannibal paused as he sniffed the air. “Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches… So much for healthy snacks, did you not see the celery sticks and fruits I put in the fridge to have ready for when you arrived home?”

“I did, and then I was asked to make a peanut butter jelly sandwich. How could I say no?” Will smiled, finally getting his own kiss on the cheek from Hannibal.

“True,” Hannibal smiled, knowing how the boy had a way to get what he wanted. It was difficult enough for Hannibal to deny Will what he wanted with his smile. “How was your day?”

“Jack came to see me,” Will started, watching Hannibal pause and wait. “There’s a case, the one that’s been on the news.”

“The tooth fairy.” Hannibal nodded.

“Yeah,” Will spoke as his hand came up to rub the back of his neck, unsure of how to say the rest though deciding to just be done with it. “I agreed to help him with the case. Before another family is slaughtered.”

The silence hung between them, Will looked away wondering if Hannibal was going to stop him, what he said however stunned him slightly.

“If you believe you can help Jack, who am I to stand in your way. I trust your judgement Will.”

“You don’t mind?” Came the astonished reply. “I’ll make sure I still get to pick Eros up from the kinder so you won’t have to move your own schedule around.”

“I don’t mind if you want me to pick him up, I’ve been meaning to take some time off in the afternoons to spend at home, perhaps now is my chance to do it as we talked about before.” Hannibal turned and went to the fridge, pulling out a bottle of sauvignon blanc and a glass as he poured one for himself. “When are you going to visit the scene?”

“Later tonight after we put Eros to bed, I didn’t want to upset his routine.” Will admitted, already having the address on him and the go ahead from Jack.

He let the topic drop as he then asked about Hannibal’s day instead, trying to retain some normalcy as he knew he was about to enter into another mindset that night, but he believed he could do it. He would walk the scene, relive the crime and put together all the pieces from the file, hopefully finding some details others may have missed to catch the killer and be done with it.

How complicated could it be?

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The night was clear as Will turned into the driveway of the Leeds house. Turning off his lights the first thing he noticed was how hidden away the house appeared, perfect for privacy from the neighbour’s with the trees surrounding it.

Getting out of the Bentayga, he locked the doors and held the file as he walked down the path to the side door where the killer had entered. It’s easy for him to notice the dog kennel with the occupant missing, he looks down at the file as he recalls seeing nothing about it, it is something he will have to take up with Jack.

He comes to the door, the crime scene tape over it, fishing a knife from his pocket he cuts it and then opens the house with the key and enters into it’s darkened rooms. The shadows on the walls of the trees move with the wind, Will wonders if it was like this the night the tooth fairy came calling.

He moves through the kitchen, shoes clacking against the tiles as he heads for the stairs, once he hits the carpet nothing is heard anymore. It's easy to follow the path the tooth fairy has left, blood smeared upon the walls as he enters the childrens bedroom first, he assess the scene before leaving and heading to the parents room next. A floorboard underneath creaks as he walks, making him slow down and pause at the master bedroom as he looks in and see's the blood spattered up on the walls from an arterial spray. There is only a slight twitch as he leaves and heads for the last childs bedroom. He looks in, remembering the scene, seeing the pool of blood on the floor where the child had been hiding under the bed.

Moving back to the master bedroom, he enters, taking a deep breath as he puts the file down on the bed. It remain closed as Will then shuts his eyes, trying to calm the fear he can feel bubbling up knowing what mindset he is about to step into. With a deep breath, he forces himself to relax and lets the pendulum swing.

I come in through the side, I know it is a glass door and I come prepared. The dog is not there to wake the owners, I already eliminated the threat.

Quietly I climb the stairs, silencer in hand as I enter the bedroom of the first children, both are sleeping in theirs beds as I shoot them. Neither were aware of anyone there, they bleed out slowly not waking and remembering how their parents tucked them in the night before.

From here I head towards the master bedroom. Mr and Mrs. Leeds are both asleep.

I slice Mr. Leeds throat, stepping back as the man struggles forth to try and fight me, but while his throat is severed he does nothing more than fall down and create a blood spray that paints the walls.

Mrs. Leeds wakes, I instantly shoot her in the abdomen, aiming for the liver. She falls back on the bed groaning in pain.

As I start to make my way from the bedroom, Mr. Leeds follows, trying to catch me to save his children, he does not know they are already dead. He falls just outside the master bedroom door, his last gurgled breath leaving him as I head to the last bedroom.

When I enter the last bedroom, I can not find the child in bed, but his ragged breathing gives him away. I kneel down, pulling him from under the bed before I shoot him in the back of the head.

With the Leed family dead, except Mrs. Leed, I line them in the master bedroom. Then the smashing of the mirrors begins.

I take the smashed pieces of glass, placing them in the families eyes so they can see the change I'm about to bestow Mrs. Leeds, I want an audience.

Breaking from the chains of thought, Will opens his eyes to the vacant room. The image of the children and Mrs. Leeds upon the bed, bloodied and with glass in their eyes swims in his mind's eyes. He takes a shaky breath as he centers himself before picking up the file again.

“You had to leave something.’ Will mutters to himself as he looks through the file, there is something there he is missing, his mind to centered on the dead to provide it. He finds it near the end of the report, the talcum powder, it had not been in the house, so where had it come from.

The image of taking off a glove invades Will’s mind, he can see it so cleary being pulled off the killer’s hand and the talcum powder in the glove falling onto the body.

“You had to touch her, not with the gloves, but your bare hands, you just needed to.”

He had a guess as to where, he just needed to get to Jack before they buried the bodies.

As he left the house, he was on the phone to the man, telling him to check the eyes of the victim. If he was to touch the victims anywhere, it would be their eyes he gathered, seeing as the rest of the body had been dusted for prints.

Once he got to the car, he sat in the driver’s seat, finishing his phone call with Jack before he was left with his own mind to deal with. Flashes of what had happened in that house kept invading his mind, seeing the family struggle the acts the killer did. Will hated it, he tried to focus on driving instead as he headed home, it was difficult, but he was glad when he saw the familiar driveway and headed into the house without pause.

The first place he headed to was Eros’s room, finding the boy fast asleep as he snuck in and came to lay down on the bed next to him. He let his fingers brush through those wild curls as the boy slept peacefully.

So enraptured with his son, he didn’t hear Hannibal come in, only when the older man came to sit next to Will and put his hand upon his lovers back did he look to the alpha.

“They were just children, Hannibal. They stood no chance against this killer. None.” Will whispered as he felt tears building, any case involving children had always been difficult, but now more so that he had Eros.

“That is why you are helping Jack, to catch him.” Hannibal spoke kindly, understanding why Will was where he was.

“That’s the thing Hannibal, he’s going to be difficult to catch. He-” Stopping as Eros rolled over, Will took a deep breath, kissing the boy on the forehead before he then left the room with Hannibal.

Both headed for the master bedroom instead. “He’s going to be difficult to catch, he’s clean, killing the rest of the Leeds family was just an inconvenience.”

“Who was it that held his interest?” Hannibal asked.

“Mrs. Leeds, he wanted to change her and her family was his audience.” Will spoke with a visible shiver. He could feel his old mindset returning the more he spoke with Hannibal, just like they used to years ago. He could feel how close he was going to get to this killer which concerned him, after the executioner, he tried to stay away from field work. But this was

dragging him in, along with Jack, he could feel his old life knocking at the door, like madness was waiting on the other side.

“I just feel, the more I look into this, I’ll be different when I come back, home.” Will felt Hannibal embrace him behind, lips upon the shell of his ear.

“I won’t.” Hannibal whispered before kissing Will gently.

Chapter End Notes

chapter 2 for part 3 will take some time as I'm trying to find a balance between Hannibal and his newest patient, which is highly important

End Notes

Hopefully you enjoys this! I thought it would be cute to give Will a family, and have a different reason to see Hannibal. I'm working on the next chapter and some other WIP's which I can hopefully load up soon. Thank you for your support guys <3

PS Hannibal is still going to be a dick.

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